TRUTH and PEACE

OR

The Last and most FRIENDLY DEBATE

CONCERNING

Infant Baptism,

Being a brief Answer to a late Book, intitulad, *The Case of Infant Baptism*.

(Written by a Doctor of the Church of England.)

[illegible]

I. That the [illegible] the Covenant of [illegible] not bound to observe it.

II. That [illegible] by the Doctor) but [illegible] of the Fact of [illegible]

III. That the [illegible] Fable, or destructive to [illegible]

IV. The Doctor's [illegible] swered.

V. From the whole it is made evident, [illegible] Sacred Baptism, in respect of the true [illegible] Administration, is the only true method to [illegible] Christian Religion in all Nations, where it [illegible] humane Innovation.

[illegible]

A brief Discourse of the Sign of the [illegible] and Sowing at the Altar, in the [illegible]

By THOMAS GRANTHAM.

The [illegible] Christ. *Cartesian Essence of Orig.* [illegible]

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C. 146 (12)

The PREFACE.

THAT *Prophecy of St.* Paul, 2 *Tim.* 4. 4. *That* Men shall turn away their Ears from the Truth, and shall be turned unto Fables, *had too much of its Verification in the early Times of Christianity; and as in other respects, so in the case of sacred Baptism, both in respect of the Time and Order in which it should be performed.* 1. *From a Fear that Sin committed after Baptism should hardly (if at all) be remitted, many did delay their Duty, being desirous to have the full remission of their Sins near their Death. This scandalous delay of Baptism proved pernicious to the Church of Christ, as well as to the Persons thus neglecting their Duty, and seems to have been the occasion of altering the manner of the Administration of Baptism. For many of those Delayers being surprised with Sickness, and afraid to die without Baptism, requested that it might be administred to them in their sick Beds, which was endulged to them without any Warrant from Heaven, which in such cases should always be enquired for. Yet this Custom was so doubtful to them that did allow it, that they required such* Chinicks, *that in case they recovered their Sickness, they should be had to the River, and there be baptized.* Cyprian Epist. ad Magnum.

2. *Others did as much outrun the Rule of this Duty in preposterous haste, even to baptize Infants as soon as born, and sometimes before; and this Error sprang from this apprehension, that God had tied the Salvation of all Flesh to Baptism, that even Infants dying without it, could not be saved: Yea so powerful was this Error, that its Assertors did Anathematize all that held the contrary. The* Council of Afric *decreed,* That all that affirm young Children receive eternal Life, albeit they be not by Baptism renewed, they are accursed. *Sure a more unreasonable Decree was never made by Men.* S. Fisher. Bap. lib. p. 322.

Now this Leaven of false Doctrine has so prevailed, that scarce any but Infants came to be concerned in obeying Christ in Baptism; nor could poor Infants obey him therein; for Austin *confesses they did not willingly receive Baptism, but strove against it with great Crying. So that neither Young nor Old (in a manner) were found in some Ages to put on Christ in Baptism, seeing that cannot be done without the free Consent of an Heart enlightened by Faith;* Gal. 3. 26, 27. Acts 2. 40.

It is therefore the work and proper business of the Restorers of holy Baptism to do what they possibly may to remove this Stumbling-block out of the way. I

mean this Doctrine which would damn to Hellish Torments all Infants dying unbaptized. Concerning which I have wrote several Treatises, and wonder to consent still to be an Advocate for all dying Infants, as being through the Grace of God in our Lord Jesus Christ, discharged of the condemning Power of Original Sin, and having no Actual Sin, the Infirmity of their Nature shall not damn them, but the Mercy of God shall save them all. And were Mens Judgments clear in this Point, the Controversy about Infant-Baptism would naturally cease, and all Men would see it the only safe way to refer Baptism to the time wherein through Repentance and Faith it might, according to the Will of God, interest them in the remission of their Sins, and in the Priviledges of the Church of the Living God, in order to Life eternal.

I shall therefore once more endeavour to take away this false Covering, which is not of God's Spirit, I mean the Doctrine of Infant-Damnation, by proposing a few things to this Generation, as an Introduction to my Reply to the Case of Infant-Baptism. And,

1. Seeing it cannot enter into the Heart of any Christian (I hope) that God does create Infants on purpose to damn them, and to shew them no Mercy (seeing he is very merciful to the chief of Sinners) if we can find out a just cause for the damning of them, it must be either, 1. From themselves, from their Parents, from the Devil, or from Christ's not loving them, so as to redeem them from the Fall which they had in Adam. But none of these things can be the cause of Infants Damnation. 1. They cannot damn themselves by sinful Courses, and it is certain our gracious God will damn none, who do not first destroy themselves by their Wickedness. This is evident by his unwillingness to destroy those who had destroyed themselves, Hosea 13. 9. O Israel, thou hast destroyed thy self, but in me is thy Help. How then can it enter into any Christian to think that God should have no pity for innocent Babes who never offended him? Is he thus compassionate towards great Sinners, and is there no Help in him for poor Infants?

2. No Man can damn Infants, because if any have power to damn his Infants, all Men have it, it's no Man's peculiar Power (whether good or bad) to do this; and if any say, all Men have this Power, he reflects upon the Goodness of God for giving such power to Men, and contradicts the Word of God, Jer. 31. Every one shall die for his own Iniquity — the Son shall not bear the Iniquity of the Father. This is only true in the case of eternal Death: for Children, even Infants, often die for their Fathers Sin a temporal Death, as in the old World, in Sodom, yea and in Jerusalem too, Lam. 2. 11. Yet who can think that our just and merciful God should now after their swooning in the Streets, cast them into Hellish Torments. It was not the Iniquity of the Infants, but of the grown Persons which cried for Vengeance.

3. The

3. *The Devil cannot damn Infants, because they are out of the Reach of his Temptations.* They know not to chuse them, nor refuse them; they know not their right hand from the left; they know neither Good nor Evil: whom the Devil cannot tempt, them he cannot damn. A learned Protestant tells us, God will not damn any Person for that which they [illegible] help. This Sentence must needs be as true in the case of Infants as any F[illegible] World. And indeed the Equity of that merciful Law, Deut. 22. 25, 26. may suffice to convince any Man, that in the Judgment of the Almighty there is no Sin in Infants worthy of Damnation; seeing what Sin soever is upon them, it was impossible for them to avoid it. They therefore shall not be damned for it.

When Christ puts the Question, How can ye escape the Damnation of Hell? *He speaks to incorrigible Sinners, that the Fear of Damnation should not overwhelm weak Persons; but never did he speak a Word against poor Infants. He never told them they were of the Devil. Satan is not the Father of Infants. Ergo, they are not his Children.*

4. *Christ loved and gave himself for all saving Infants; therefore not one of them shall be damned. Christ* gave himself a Ransom for all: *He loved,* and dyed for the chief of Sinners. *Therefore he loved and died for the poor innocent Babes:* He bought them that deny him, 2 Pet. 2. 1, 2. *How should he despise the helpless Infant?*

Object. If God be so good to all Infants, why then is he not so good to let them be baptized. I answer; *God is good to Infants in that he accepts them without Baptism. And I appeal to any considering Man, whether he was not as good to the Infants of the Righteous before* Abraham, *as he was to the Infants of* Abraham? *and whether God was not as good to an Infant in* Israel *of 7 days old, as to an Infant of 8 days old? And whether God be not as good to us, in that he accepts us in the use of a very few Ceremonies, as he was to* Israel, *accepting them in the use of many Ceremonies? And whether if he had pleased to accept of us upon Repentance and Faith without Baptism, he had not been as good to us, as now, that together with Repentance and Faith he does require Baptism? The Truth is, Baptism is therefore good, because it is commanded. It is not good in it self, no more was Circumcision, nor indeed any Ceremony. Now Repentance and Faith are good in themselves, it's absolutely necessary, that those that sin, should be humbled for it and forsake it. It's absolutely necessary for the Creature to believe, and to depend upon the Creator.*

Now Baptism though it be not good in it self, yet Heavens Authority enjoyning it, and Divine Mysteries being contained in it, and Privileges conferred by it, it is therefore good to those to whom it is appointed. But where God requires it not, but extends his Goodness without it, it is a like Charity in

in us to give it where he [illegible] not appoint it, as it would have been in Abraham *to give Circum[illegible] to every Male Child as soon as it was born, or at 6 or 7 days ol[illegible] to his Females also, because it was a sign of a great Covenant [illegible] to whom it did belong by Appointment.*

[illegible] therefore I consider further, that as those had no Loss of any Privilege that was necessary for them in Israel, *who by the Law were not required to be circumcised [as in the case of all Females] So neither shall any lose God's Favour for not being baptized when he requires it not. The Danger lieth on the other side. For had* Abraham *out of a conceit of making Infants [Male] of 7 days old, and all his Females also Sharers in the Covenant, equally with those of 8 days old circumcised them, he had hazarded both his own and their Loss of the Covenant. In like manner, whoever will (presumptuously at least) baptize any Person whom God does not require to be baptized, is so far from bringing him into Covenant, that he runs the hazzard of losing his own part in the Covenant:* Rev. 22. For I testify unto every Man.--If any shall add unto these things, God shall add to him the Plagues which are written in this Book. *But,*

4. All dying Infants are under the Blessing of the Covenant of Grace, therefore no dying Infant shall be damned. *This, how strange soever it may seem, must be a Truth, or else poor dying Infants are the worst of Creatures. When therefore we say all dying Infants are in the Covenant of Grace, we mean it, as God hath vouchsafed to interess them in his Mercy by Christ; That as Condemnation came upon them by* Adam's *Sin, so Justification of Life has abounded towards them by the Obedience of Christ; and he himself that best knew God's Design concerning them, has declared, without excepting so much as one of them, that* to them belongs the Kingdom of Heaven. *And what then is he that should except them, as the manner of some is, and in their cruel Judgment send them by Millions to Hell Torments? Now either Infants (even all of them) are thus in or under the Blessing of the Covenant through the Mercy of God, or they are not concern'd in any Covenant at all: for the Covenant of pure Nature, as made with* Adam *in Innocency, concerns not Infants, but as the Breach of it is imputed to Mankind; but here they are lost. The Covenant of Works concerns them not, it cannot be said of them,* the Man that doth these things shall live in them. *And to say that Infants are under the Blessing of no Covenant, is to rank them with the vilest of Men, yea which the Devils themselves, who are therefore most accursed, because there is no Saviour, no Mercy for them.* They are shut up in Chains under Darkness to the Judgment of the great day. *Now far be it from all Christians to have such Thoughts of God,* whose tender Mercies are over all his Works. *The very Devils had a State wherein they might have been*

happy, but presumptuously fell from it. Jude v. 6. But poor Babes before they had a bring-ware exposed to Condemnation through the Offence of another. Shall these Objects of Pitty perish eternally too without Remedy? O God forbid; let them be pressed with all the Inconveniences consequent to Original Sin, yet either it will not be laid to the charge of Infants, so as to be sufficient to condemn them; or if it could, yet the Mercy and absolute Goodness of God will secure them, if he takes them away before they can glorify him with a free Obedience. Dr. Taylor.

5. No Man is able to prove that any Infant ever was or ever shall be damned to hellish Torments; therefore none of them, dying such, shall be damned. We should hold nothing as a Point of Faith, but upon clear Proof, and especially things of so high a Nature as this is. Some Men talk of some Infants as if they were little better than Devils. But could never yet bring a just charge against any one of that innocent part of Mankind. The Instance of Esau is all that looks like an Enemy to Infants, but mind it well, there is no such matter in it. God knew that Esau should not dy an Infant, he knew he would be a bad Man, and is judged as such. Esau is not to be ranked with dying Infants; and this Instance failing, there is not the Shadow of any Proof that God will damn poor dying Infants.

But because the Doctor, whose Book we are to examine, has some Kindness for all dying Infants, as I conceive, though the Quality of his Subject does sometimes enforce him to drop such Sentences as may seem to deny all Mercy to unbaptized Infants, yet he corrects all such Passages, by saying they may be saved by uncovenanted Mercy, &c. A strange Speech it is, but there is some Kindness to poor Infants dying without Baptism; I shall therefore insist on farther at present upon the point of Infants Salvation; but make my way to the Book it self, by premising a few things.

Our late Assertors of Infant-Baptism seem to me to be ready to yield that Christ has not commanded to baptize Infants, yea some of them grant it in totidem verbis; yet they think themselves safe, because (in their Judgment) Infant Baptism is not forbidden. And with this Apprehension away they go to the Jews for Relief, who out of their Talmud, Gemara, and Maimonides give them an account of some such Usage among the Israelites. And now from Dr. Hammond (who has searched much into the Rabinical Doctrine) they grow confident that Baptism was a Jewish Ceremony originally, though they grant it was but of humane Institution, and that the Christian Baptism is but the Copy, which is taken from that Original. Yea the learned Author of the case of Infant Baptism does tell us boldly; That our Saviour being obliged to lay by Circumcision, consecrated this Custom of the Jewish Church to be the Sacrament of Initiation into his Church. But certainly John's Baptism of Repentance for Remission of Sins, which was from Heaven and not of Men, was more fit to be established by our Lord Christ, for a perpetual Ministery in his Church, than such a Jewish Custom.

Pitty it is that we should yet be contending about Infant-Baptism from this supposed humane Institution of the Jews. When our needful Work is to do our Endeavour, to prepare our Youth (and many aged Persons too) for an orderly Admission to that Holy Laver for Remission of Sins, and not to blind their Eyes by fabling to them that they were regenerate and born again, as soon almost as they came into the World. We have certainly as much need of good Schools to catechise our Youth, and to prepare them thereby for the Profession of the most sacred Religion, as the ancient Christians had.

This is the way to have our Posterity to receive the Truth in the Love of it, when their Judgments are informed to understand it in the Beauty and Excellency as well as to see the Necessity of it. This is the way to have them stand fast under all Revolutions, when they have been radicated in the first Principles of Cathechism, Heb. 6. 1, 2. These Principles of Christianity are plain and easy to be understood, and yet God knows there are but a few that have a competent Understanding of them in this Nation. And it is but a bad way to promote Christian Knowledge in Principles of Catechism [as that of Baptism is such] by Stories out of the Talmud, or other Jewish Books, which if we had them we cannot understand them, why then are we sent unto

them?

them? Is the Holy Scripture less able to make us wise to Salvation than the Talmud? Let us take to the good old way, and diligently teach our Youth the Rudiments of Religion; so shall Goodness and Mercy follow us all the days of our Life, and we shall dwell (by our Posterity) in the House of the Lord for ever.

One main thing in the Book now under Consideration is the Covenant of Circumcision, which the Doctor will have to be a Gospel-Covenant, and Circumcision a Gospel-Ordinance. Now if all this were true, it would come short of proving it our Duty to baptize our Infants. For stating there is a proper time for our Participation of all Gospel-Privileges, so we must learn what time this is, not from Circumcision, (for then the 8th day must precisely be the time) but from Christ and his Apostles, who are our only infallible Instructors herein. But that the Doctor is mistaken in this thing which he makes a Pillar to his Building, is (I hope) sufficiently made manifest.

Nor shall it be amiss in this place to give you the Judgment of a very learned Jew, lately converted and baptized in the City of London, because he may rationally be thought to understand the Nature of the Covenant of Circumcision (being a great Student in all Jewish, as well as Christian Theology) as any other Man. And this is the account we have from him of this matter, in his printed Exposition upon the Acts of the Apostles, chap. 2. 40. The Jews (saith he) who were circumcised in Infancy, before Circumcision was abrogated, were here baptized, by the order of Peter: from whence it appears that by Baptism and Circumcision, two Covenants altogether differing, were to be sealed, of which the one was with those who by the Law of Nature were born of the Seed of Abraham, the other with those who were spiritually reborn by the Gift of Faith.

And whereas one main hinge upon which the Doctor's Discourse for Infant-Baptism is supported, is the Custom of the Jewish Church, and the Custom of the ancient Christian Church, the said learned Jew speaks very well to that Plea in these Words: The Customs of Churches ought to submit to the Words of Christ, not the Words of Christ to be wrested to the Customs of the Church; in regard the Words of Christ are the Foundation upon which all Church-Customs are to be built, that they may be safe and laudable. Whatsoever favours against the Words of Christ, favours against the Truth; and as Tertullian says, whatever favours contrary to Truth, is Heresy, though it be an ancient Custom. It is in the Power of God to pardon those that err out of Simplicity; but because we erred once, we are not always to go on in our Errors.

The Doctor divides his Book into a previous Discourse, and into the Resolution of five Questions. In stating and resolving his Questions, he repeats much of the previous Discourse: I have endeavoured to take his strict, and have set down many of his Words; and my Reply to his previous Discourse may serve as a Supplement to my Reply to the Resolution of his Questions, because the same Arguments are handled in both.

What I have added about the Sign of the Cross in Baptism, I have collected chiefly from a learned Protestant Writer, in a Book intituled, A Scholastical Discourse against Symbolizing with Antichrist in Ceremonies.

I have intituled my Book (as you see) The last and most Friendly Debate concerning Infant-Baptism. And glad should I be to see an end of the Controversy, by an Agreement in the Truth, or a brotherly Condescension in such things on either part, as may be without Sin.

That I have undertaken this Task was, not the Fruit of my own Choice, but indeed I was particularly desired by Letter from some Persons of Quality and Learning to give a brief and distinct Answer to the Contents of the Case of Infant-Baptism; which they commend for the temper in which it is framed, and for that it is very nervous in Argument; insomuch that till it was answered, it was so satisfactory, that more need not be said on their part. And now, I hope, they will do me the Justice, as to read me with Patience, and to judge without Prejudice, knowing that shortly we must all appear before the Judgment-Seat of Christ, and receive from him the things done in the Body, whether they be good or bad.

The

The Last and Most FRIENDLY DEBATE CONCERNING INFANT-BAPTISM.

CHAP. I.

That the Covenant, Gen. 17. *(strictly taken) was not a Gospel-Covenant, nor Circumcision a Gospel-Ordinance, as is affirmed by the Doctor.*

THE Learned Author of the Book now under Consideration, may rationally expect some Reply from those whom he calls *Anabaptists*, or else interpret their Silence to be either a sullen slighting of his Endeavours to convince them, or that they are not able (in their own Judgments) to shew the Insufficiency of his Arguments; and the rather, because he has more obliged us to consider his Writing, by his modest and friendly management of the Controversy, than many of his Brethren who have bent their Stile against us.

We shall therefore (God willing) with no less Modesty and friendly Demeanour, shew our Reasons, why in our Judgment his Labours have not only come short of proving the baptizing of Infants to be warrantable by God's Word, but has rather given us great cause to think, that the Case of Infant-Baptism cannot be made good by all that Learning and Art can do, it being wholly without Divine Authority. And to make this good, we will now consider the chief of his Strength, in the several Pages of his Learned Treatise.

In *pag.* 1, & 2. he would have it believed, that the State of the Church from *Abraham* to *Moses*, and from *Moses* to Christ was paralleld by the differing State of the Christian Church from Christ to

Constantine, and from *Constantine* onwards. *For* (saith he) *there is ground for this distinction in the reason of the thing, as is evident to any Man who is capable of considering the difference betwixt the Church Christian, before and after its Union with the Empire.*

But here seems to be a very great mistake in the very entrance of his Book, for it is certain that the Jewish Church from *Abraham* to *Moses*, had very little of the Face of a Church-state till his time, being as yet destitute of most of her Laws, both for Constitution and Government. *Abraham* himself owning a Priest superior to himself, even after he was called of God, and had received the Promise both of being that Person in whose Seed all Nations should be blessed, and that to his Seed God would give the Land of *Canaan*, as will appear to such as shall peruse these Scriptures; *Gen.* 12. 1, 2, 3. & 13. 15, 16. & 14. 18, 19, 20.

Now this Covenant which God made with *Abraham*, that in his Seed all Nations of the Earth should be blessed, *Gen.* 12. which was indeed an Evangelical Promise or Covenant, (and in the Faith of which *Abraham* was justified, near thirty Years before Circumcision had any being in the World) cannot be called the *Covenant of Circumcision*. Neither yet when Circumcision was instituted, was the Seed of *Abraham* formed into a Church-state, in contradistinction to all the World beside, for still *Melchisedec* was *Priest of the most High God*, and many righteous Men were then living, who outlived *Abraham* himself, and were truly Church-members, yea and Governors of Churches too, as well as *Abraham*, and yet they were not at all concern'd in the Covenant of Circumcision: And hence it's evident, they *being under the Covenant of Grace*, the Covenant of Circumcision, and the Covenant of Grace *were then distinct*, and *not the same Covenant*, so, but that the one might and did subsist without the other.

This then may serve to shew the Doctor's great Mistake, in making the Church of Christ, from Christ to *Constantine*, parrallel to the Church from *Abraham* to *Moses*, when in Truth a greater Disparity can hardly be shewed: For though the Seed of *Abraham* till *Moses* was in a State of Peregrination, as also was the Church of Christ till *Constantine*, yet the Church Christian was then not only in her Purity, but also both for Constitution and Government, as compleat as ever she was since, having received from Christ and his Apostles all the Rules of his holy Word (*even the whole Counsel of God*) necessary to her Church-state; and therewith all the Gifts of the holy Spirit, in most plentiful manner, by which to *stand perfect in all the Will of God.*

And

And on the other side, the Seed of *Abraham*, till the Times of Mo-
ſes had neither Law, Prieſt-hood, nor Sacrifice, *in a ſettled Church-*
way, only they were diſtinguiſhed by the Covenant of Circumciſion,
as a People from whom in time the Saviour of the World ſhould pro-
ceed, and that they ſhould be ſeparated from the Nations, and ſet-
tled in a plentiful Country, with Laws and ſpecial Protection from
the Almighty *till Shiloh ſhould come*; and when the *Meſſiah* was ma-
niſeſted to *Iſrael*, the Covenant of Circumciſion ceaſed, and the glo-
rious Goſpel-Covenant was now plenarily to be *made known to all Na-*
tions for the Obedience of Faith, Rom. 16. And here we will take no-
tice of that excellent Paſſage in Mr. *Baxter*, *The Jews* (ſaith he) were
not the whole of God's Kingdom, or Church of Redeemed Ones in the World,
but that as the Covenant was made with all Mankind, ſo amongſt them God
had other Servants beſides the Jews, though it was they that had the extraor-
dinary Benediction of being his peculiar Sacred People. Now as this
was true all along, ſo it was more particularly manifeſt in the times
of *Melchiſedec* and other holy Men that outlived *Abraham*.

What the Doctor means to compare *Conſtantine* with *Moſes*, is very
doubtful: Is it to make Chriſtian Magiſtrates Legiſlators to the Church
of Chriſt? We know indeed *Moſes* was a great Prophet, and appointed
of God to give Laws and Statutes to *Iſrael*; but *Conſtantine* was not his
Antitype, but Chriſt only; and whoſoever will not hear him ſhall be
cut off, but not by the Imperial Sword, as God knows ſince the uni-
ting of the Church Chriſtian to the Empire, *viz.* the *Civil* and Eccleſi-
aſtical Power for the management of Church-matters, there has been
a very bloody Scene of Affairs in moſt Places where ſuch a kind of
Unity of the Church with the Empire or Worldly Government has
been found, and for the moſt part thoſe who held to the Truth in the
greateſt Purity and Power of it, became a Prey to that Church who
obtained that Grandeur and Advantage, of which *England* has of
late, as well as formerly, been a terrible inſtance.

Another remarkable difference betwixt the Church Chriſtian from
Chriſt to *Conſtantine*, and that of the Seed of *Abraham* from his
Days to *Moſes*, was this, The latter ſo far as it may be called a
Church in that time was National, and dependant on the Family of
Abraham, none being permitted to dwell in the ſame Family unleſs
circumciſed. But the Church Chriſtian from Chriſt to *Conſtantine* was
not National, nor dependant on any Family, as ſuch, but conſiſted
only of ſuch in any Family as feared God, and wrought Righteouſ-
neſs, *Acts* 10. 34, 35. And this being conſidered, will ſhew that the

Church from *Abraham* to *Moses* was not so Spiritual and Evangelical, as the Doctor would have it, but were rather natural Branches of *Abraham*'s Family, and the greatest part of them grosly ignorant of the Evangelical Covenant made with *Abraham* before he was circumcised, which plainly appeared, not only in that they understood little of *Moses*, as he foreshewed the Coming of Christ, but also when Christ the true Seed, to whom the Promise was made, came to accomplish it, *they knew him not, nor the Voice of their own Prophets.*

The Doctor brings *Gal.* 3. 17. & *Rom.* 4. 13. to prove *that the Jewish Church was founded upon an Evangelical Covenant, for substance the same with that which since is made betwixt God and us through Christ.* And he gives a Paraphrase upon *Rom.* 4. from *ver.* 9 to 15. & *Gal.* 3. from v. 5 to 10. *to prove that Faith was the Condition of the Abrahamical Covenant*, which being understood of the Covenant or Promise, *Gen.* 12. of the *blessing all Nations in the Seed of Abraham*, and the Obligation or Condition of believing that Promise, to extend only to such as had Means and Ability to believe it, is not denied by us; nor can it signify any thing to the Doctor's purpose, for sure he cannot bring Infants under this Condition, which is the thing he drives at.

But for a more full Answer, Let us consider where the stress of the matter lies between the Doctor and us: He would have this Evangelical Covenant to be the *Covenant of Circumcision*, Gen. 17. We say, *'Tis the Covenant or Promise*, Gen. 12. Now in the Doctor's Text *Abraham* is promised, that *Nations shall come out of him, and that he shall be a Father of many Nations*; but not a word of the Blessing which concerns *all the Nations of the Earth.* Now in our Text we have it full, *In thee shall all Families of the Earth be blessed.* But the best way is to let St. *Paul* resolve this Doubt, even as he is quoted by the Doctor, *Rom.* 4. *The Promise that he should be Heir of the World was not given to* Abraham, *or to his Seed through the Law.* And what Law was *Abraham* under, but the Law or Covenant of Circumcision? The Apostle adds, *But through the Righteousness of Faith*; and yet more plainly, *Rom.* 4. 10. *How was it then reckoned? when he was in Circumcision or in Uncircumcision? Not in Circumcision, but in Uncircumcision.* St. *Paul* most clearly refers to the Promise made *Gen.* 12. near thirty years before *Abraham* was circumcis'd. Now whether Circumcision be of the Law, or whether it was a Gospel-Ordinance, is the business to be considered.

The Doctor does expressly affirm, *that Circumcision was a Gospel-Ordinance*, p. 24. And we say directly contrary, *that it was a Legal or Jewish Ceremony.* To prove that Circumcision was no Gospel-Ordinance

nance we argue thus, *That which could profit no Man, except he kept the whole Law, was no Gospel Ordinance*, &c. The Apostle proves the *minor*, *Rom* 2. 25. *Circumcision verily profiteth if thou keep the Law; but if thou be a Breaker of the Law, thy Circumcision is made Uncircumcision.* And we argue further from *Gal.* 5. 2. If Circumcision bound Men to keep the whole Law, then it was no Gospel-Ordinance, &c. The Assumption is proved by the Text, *I testify again to every Man that is circumcised, that he is a Debtor to do the whole Law.* Circumcision therefore could never be a Gospel-Ordinance: for as the Gospel frees us from the condemning Power, and from the Servitude of the Law, so every Gospel-Ordinance holds forth that blessed Freedom to all faithful Men in both Respects. And hence it is clear that howsoever Circumcision was a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith to *Abraham*, it could not be so as a Gospel-Ordinance (for he was a Breaker of the Law after this) any more than his Offering his Son *Isaac* upon the Altar, *Jam.* 2. 21, 22. *In which he was justified by Faith.* And so was *Abel* in his Sacrifice, *Gen.* 4. *Heb.* 11. Yea these were evident Seals and Pledges of their Faith, as much as Circumcision was to *Abraham*, yet none of those can hence be proved to be Gospel-Ordinances. For indeed at the rate of the Doctor's arguing, all the Sacrifices propitiatory, performed by faithful Men in the time of the Law, may be proved to be Gospel-Ordinances as well as Circumcision. And by his Consequence all that took part in these Sacrifices, have a right to participate in all Gospel-Ordinances which hold forth Christ and him crucified, as well as in Baptism. And because the Doctor builds much upon this *Topic*, we will further try the Strength of it; *That which was always in Comparison of the Gospel, a weak and beggarly Element, was never a Gospel-Ordinance. But such was Circumcision.* The *Major* is clear, because 'tis the Property of all Gospel-Ordinances to represent those that are under them, perfect in Christ Jesus, *Gal.* 1. 28. So that the Gospel-Ordinances are *neither weak nor beggarly*; but as they are a part of the Gospel it self, are said to be *the Power of God unto Salvation.* The *Minor* is true, because the *Ceremonies of the Law made nothing perfect*; *for if they had, then they had not ceased*, Heb. 7. 18, 19. and 10. 1. And it is evident St. *Paul* calls the whole Ceremonial Law (a part whereof was Circumcision) *beggarly Elements*, Gal. 4. 9. And they are all equally ceased.

And seeing upon this Ground the Doctor boldly affirms the Covenant of Circumcision to be an *Evangelical Covenant*, because Circumcision did *initiate thereinto*, p. 5. My next Undertaking shall be to prove

that

that the Covenant of Circumcision (strictly taken) was no Gospel-Covenant, though called so very frequently by the Doctor, as p. 3. and 4. all which he would make good, because St. *Paul* calls Circumcision *a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith*, and because it *signified the Circumcision of the Heart*, Deut. 10. 16. and 30. 6.

The contrary will appear from the very Recital of the Covenant it self, as set down *Gen.* 17. from the Nature of Circumcision being a Legal Ceremony (as we have proved) and chiefly because the Covenant of Grace was not peculiar to *Abraham* and his, but common to others, though they were not circumcised.

To begin with the very Expressions of the Covenant, *Gen.* 17. from *ver.* 4 to 15. Whoso shall diligently read it, will not find one Word of the Promise of *Blessedness to all Nations*. But that Promise of the Messiah in whom all the Nations of the Earth should be blessed was made (as we shewed) near thirty Years before this Covenant of Circumcision was made, But it was rather a Recital of God's Promise to *Abraham*, Gen. 13. when *Abraham* and *Lot* parted asunder. And indeed of all the eight times which God spake to *Abraham*, we find the Promise of Blessing to all Nations in the Seed of *Abraham*, only expressed in the first time, *Gen.* 12. and in the last time that God spake to him, *Gen.* 22. And yet it is also true that St. *Paul* does include *Abraham's* Fatherhood over the Faithful in that Covenant, *Gen.* 17. 5. and 15. 5. And to Circumcision was *to him a Seal of the Faith which* Abraham *had, with respect to the Promises made at the former Appearings of God to him*. But then it is as true that of *this Faith* it could be no Seal to any other Person, no *not to* Isaac *himself*, because it was *Abraham alone* that should have this Honour to be the Father of the Faithful.

Mr. Cox on the Covenant.

After this manner the ancient Christian Church seems to have understood the Covenant of Circumcision, as appears in *Chrysostom* and *Theophilact*, as translated by two learned Writers, in these words: *Circumcision was called a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith, because it was given to* Abraham *as a Seal and Testimony of the Righteousness which he had acquired by Faith: Now this seems to be the Privilege of* Abraham *alone, and not to be transferred to others), as if Circumcision in whomsoever it was, were a Testimony of Divine Righteousness. For as it was the Privilege of* Abraham, *that he should be the Father of all Faithful, as well circumcised as uncircumcised, being already the Father of all uncircumcised, having Faith in Uncircumcision: He received first the Sign of Circumcision, that he might be the Father of the Circumcised. Now because he*

had

and this Privilege, in respect of the Righteousness which he had acquired by Faith, therefore the Sign of Circumcision was to him a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith. But to the rest of the Jews it was a Sign *that they were* Abraham's *Seed, but not a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith, as also all the Jews also were not the Fathers of many Nations.*

And says another learned Writer; " It is no ways difficult to " conceive that Circumcision might have a different respect, accord- " ing to the differing Circumstances and Capacity of its Subjects; " yea that it had so in another Instance, hath been shewed already. " It was a Seal of the Inheritance of *Canaan* to the Children of *Israel*, " and did ensure the Promise thereof to them, and their Seed; but " it gave their Bond-Servants no such right or claim: Even so it was " to *Abraham* a Seal of the Righteousness of the Faith which he had, " &c. but this arose from the peculiar and extraordinary Circum- " stances and Capacity that he was in. For it is not possible to con- " ceive, that Circumcision should be a Seal of the Righteousness of " Faith to one that never had Faith, nor the Relation of a Father to " all Believers, as *Abraham* had.—And it is equally absurd to say " that Circumcision was a Seal to all its Subjects of the Righte- " ousness of Faith, which they had while uncircumcised, as to " affirm that it was a Seal of a paternal or fatherly Relation to " all Believers, unto every one that received it.

Again, From St. *Paul, Gal.* 6. 15. we may fairly argue thus: If the Covenant of Circumcision had been the Covenant of Grace, and Circumcision the Sign of the Covenant of Grace (as the Doctor would have it;) then had all true Subjects of it (as such) been new Creatures in Christ Jesus. But the true or right Subjects of the Covenant and Sign (as such) were not new Creatures in Christ Jesus, *&c.* This whole Argument is proved from the Text, which saith, *In Christ Jesus neither Circumcision availeth any thing, nor Uncircumcision, but a new Creature.* Plainly thus the Jews were never the better (as to a Gospel-Church-state) for being the Seed of *Abraham*, or circumcised: nor the Gentiles never the worse (as to a Gospel-state) for being not the Seed of *Abraham*, and uncircumcised. For there was no other way for either to be brought under the Priviledges of the Church Evangelical, and so to be in Christ Jesus, but by *Repentance, Faith and Baptism*, or to *be born again*, *for if any Man be in Christ*, (in a Gospel-Church-way) *he is a new Creature*, 2 Cor. 5. 17. Gal. 3. 26, to the end, and 5. 24. I desire the Reader to peruse these Scriptures.

We

We have proved already that Circumcision was no Gospel-Ordinance, yet we shall add, It could not be a Gospel-Ordinance, because *Moses* gave it as an Obligation to keep the Ceremonial Law, or that intolerable Yoak of Bondage which *none was able to bear*. For though Circumcision was before *Moses*, yet it was given by him, *John* 7. 22. for this purpose, *Gal.* 5. 2, 3, 4. and it self was a part of the Yoke of Bondage. *Sacrifices* were before *Moses*, as well as Circumcision, yet they were given also by *Moses*. And hence when *Paul* opposed Circumcision, it was objected that he taught Men to forsake *Moses*, *Acts* 21. 21. And Circumcision is expresly called the *Law of Moses* by Christ himself, *John* 7. 23. And therefore the Doctor was not well advised, to *affirm it to be a Gospel-Ordinance*.

Again, The Covenant of Circumcision, and the Sign it self were not Evangelical, because the Obligation to be circumcised was peculiar to *Abraham*, and his Seed or Family, in such a sense, *as none but they were obliged to be circumcised*. Men might and did walk with God, and please God, without being concerned in the Covenant of Circumcision, as we have fully shewed. But *all Men are equally bound to obey the Gospel*, and all the Ordinances of it, who have means to know them; they do belong to all Families, *all Nations*, as much as to any, *Matth.* 28. 19, 20. *Mark* 16. 15, 16. *Rom.* 16. 26. So did not the Covenant of Circumcision.

How unlike the Covenant of Circumcision was to the Covenant of Grace, (especially in Respect of Infants) might have been perceived by the Doctor from his own Words, p. 8. where he tells us, *God made* Abraham *thus separate the Children with their Parents from all the World, and look upon them, as a part of his chosen peculiar People, by which they became relatively Holy, and differed from the Children of Unbelievers, as much as their Parents did from Unbelievers themselves.* Sure this is a cruel Sentence against poor innocent Babes, But I answer.

What Separation soever the Covenant of Circumcision made betwixt *Abraham's Family* and *the rest of the World*; It is certain it could not separate them, nor any Persons in the World, from the *Covenant of Grace*; there was nothing but Sin could do that, otherwise it had been a dismal Separation indeed. And can the Doctor once think that *Lot* was now separated from the Covenant of Grace, because he was not in the Covenant of Circumcision? Sure he was a righteous Man for all this. Yea, and other Holy Patriarchs were yet living, as *Heber*, *Salah*, *Sem*,

Mr. Broughton *Concent of Scripture.*

Sem, and so was *Melchisedec* (if he were not one of them) being Priest of the most high God. And as these, and doubtless many more, were good Men; so it's not to be questioned but they had their Holy Societies and Congregations; *Melchisedec* being then the most eminent Type of the Son of God, that ever was, as he was King of Peace, and Priest: in which Offices he must needs be serviceable to many, as is well observed by Mr. *Cox* on the Covenants, *p.* 154.

The Doctor is greatly out in making the Infants of Unbelievers to be in as ill case as the *Unbelievers themselves*, seeing Unbelievers must perish, *Mark* 16. 16. But it is not revealed yet to be the Will of God that so much as one dying Infant shall perish. And as to the rest of Mankind, Mr. *Baxter* says very well; *That as the Jews had by Promises and Prophecies and Types, more means to know God than any other Nations, so they were answerably obliged to more Knowledg and Faith than other Nations were, that had not, nor could have their means.* More Proof, *p.* 95.

And why may not this be true, That the Effects of the Evangelical Promise to *Abraham*, to be a Father of the Faithful in all Nations, had very little Relation in a Gospel-way, to the Age in which he lived, nor indeed till the times of the Gospel, or till Christ the Seed to whom the Promises were made did come? And then indeed it was graciously verified, When *by the Commandments of the everlasting God* [even Christ who is here so called] *the Gospel was made known to all Nations for the Obedience of Faith*, Rom. 16.

Nor shall the Doctor's Allegations, *p.* 7. *of the great Numbers of divers Nations which turned Jews*, prejudice that which we have said, seeing St. *Peter* affirms, that the Mystery of the Gospel was hid from these Nations and Ages, notwithstanding their Circumcision. For it is not to be supposed that these who turned Jews, were better skill'd in the Mystery of the new Covenant, or Covenant of Grace, than the Jews themselves, who (God knows) were generally Strangers to the Steps of *Abraham*'s Faith, and therefore little better in our Saviour's Judgment for being *Abraham*'s Children, *John* 8. 37, 39. Nay so ignorant were the believing Jews themselves, of the true Seed of *Abraham*, according to the Nature and Extent of the Covenant, *Gen.* 12. 3. That when *Peter* preached to the Gentiles, they contended with him, *as doing that which was not lawful*, for they yet understood not that the Grace of Repentance unto Life did belong to the Gentiles; nor did *Peter*, till a Miracle convinc'd him, understand this Grace himself,

Acts 18. The great Accession therefore of other Nations to the Jews Religion, is no Proof that they were in the Covenant of Grace, or that Circumcision was a Gospel-Ordinance: though there might be many among them that so feared God, and wrought Righteousness, as to be (through his Mercy) accepted of him; and the like in other Nations [even all Nations] too, *Acts* 10. 34, 35. Yet these Accessions did contribute much to the Fulfilling God's Promise to *Abraham* in other Respects; as to make the Name of the God of *Abraham* to be great in the Earth; and also to advance the Name of *Abraham* the Friend of God.

The Doctor tells us, p. 3. *That Faith was the Condition of the Abrahamical Covenant; that it was made with* Abraham, *as the Father of the Faithful, and in him with all Believers.* But considering what we have proved before with respect to *Abraham*'s peculiar Interest in the Covenant, we may well enquire what Covenant and Faith the Doctor means? seeing it could not be the Gospel-Grace and Faith, which was the Condition of the Covenant *of Circumcision, as that Covenant belong'd to all that were circumcised*: Because St. *Paul* tells us, whilst the Law was in force (a part of which Law Circumcision was, as we have proved) *the time of Faith was not yet come.* And that the Jews were *shut up to the Faith which was afterward to be revealed*, Gal. 3. 23, 25. And that the Law (a part whereof was Circumcision) *was added because of Transgression, till the Seed* (to wit Christ) *should come.* And shews likewise that there was no Law (as yet) given which could give Life. [*The Covenant of Grace made with* Adam, Gen. 3. *And the Promise to* Abraham, Gen. 12. *And the Renewal of the Covenant of Grace to* Noah, *between them both, must of Necessity be here excepted.*] And therefore Eternal Life could not be had by the Covenant and Law of Circumcision, as made to *Abraham*'s Posterity, otherwise than as it served (as a Type or Figure) to direct them, to look for the *Messiah* to be born of *Abraham*'s Seed, according to the Flesh. And therefore the *Promise*, so much celebrated, *Gal.* 3. can by no lawful means be referr'd to the Covenant of Circumcision, strictly taken; and then all that the Doctor has said to make the *Covenant of Circumcision a Gospel-Covenant, and Circumcision a Gospel-Ordinance*, will come to nothing, and consequently his whole Book, because it is mainly built upon this Foundation.

And that the *Promise* mentioned by St. *Paul*, *Gal.* 3. may and ought to be distinguished from the Covenant of Circumcision, will appear from the *Date of the Promise*, which was 430 Years before the Law,

Law, Gal. 3. 17. but the Covenant of Circumcision wants 25 Years of this account. This is plain to such as will consider, that that great and blessed *Promise*, that *in the Seed of* Abraham *all the Families of the Earth shall be blessed*, Gen. 12. 3. was at least 25 Years before the Covenant of Circumcision, *Gen.* 17. And this is granted by the Learned *Willet*, who in his *Hexapl.* in *Gen.* p. 145. writes thus, *From this Promise* (Gen. 12.) *made to* Abraham, *are we to count the* 430 *Years*, *which St Paul saith*, *were between the Promise and the Law*, Gal. 3. *and hereunto agreeth the Computation of* Moses, Exod. 12. 40. *that the Israelites dwelt in* Egypt 430 *Years*, *not in* Egypt *only*, *but in* Egypt *and* Canaan, *as the Septuagint do interpret the place.*

Now how this Promise had its Effect in the Ages before Christ's Incarnation, or how all the Families of the Earth were blessed in this promised Seed then, God only knoweth: for though the World had a Promise of a Saviour from the Beginning, *Gen.* 3. 15. yet that he should be born of the Seed of *Abraham*, was not revealed till now. And lest any should stumble at this, that the Promise here made, *Gen.* 12. was not confirmed till *Abraham*, was circumcised, he is to remember that St. *Paul* expresly teaches the contrary, *Gal.* 3. 17. as I have shewed. And I will add the Judgment of a learned Writer upon the place who writes thus.

"That the Gospel was preached to *Abraham*, and the Covenant of "Grace revealed to him, we have asserted in such full terms in the "Context, as none can rationally doubt thereof; and moreover in "verse 17. we have the time of God's establishing this Covenant "with him, so exactly noted, it was, saith the Text, 430 Years be"fore the giving of the Law, *viz.* on Mount *Sinai*; now the Law "was given in a very little time after the Children of *Israel* came out "of *Egypt*; and from the Beginning of the first Promise to *Abra*"*ham*, which was, *Gen.* 12. 3. unto that very Night in which the "Children of *Israel* were brought out of their Egyptian Bondage, "is the Computation of these Years made, as will be evident to him "that shall diligently compare the Chronologie of those times with "the expres Testimony of *Moses*, *Exod.* 12. 41. And it came to "pass at the end of 430 Years, even the self-same Day, it came to "pass that all the Host of the Lord went out of the Land of *Egypt*. "From the time of the first Promise, to the end of *Israel*'s sojourn"ing in the Land of *Egypt* was 430 Years, though their Abode in "*Egypt* was not near so long.

"And hence (saith he) we collect, that in the Transaction of "God with *Abraham*, recorded, *Gen.* 12. he did solemnly confirm "his Covenant with him (although *Moses* makes not express mention "of the term *Covenant*, until occasion be offered, *Gen.* 15. 18.) "for the Promise there mentioned, the Apostle asserts to be the Co"venant *confirmed of God in Christ unto* Abraham.

The Sum of all that has been said is this, That the Covenant of Circumcision properly taken, is not the Covenant of Grace, or a *Gospel-Covenant*, nor the Sign thereof Circumcision a *Gospel-Ordinance*, as the Doctor maintains and affirms, that Circumcision did *seal to its Subjects the same Grace as Baptism does now*: which cannot stand with Reason, because those who had been circumcised, should not then have been baptized for Remission of Sins, for if Circumcision did seal that Grace to its Subjects, why should it be now conferred in Baptism? *they came to Baptism not as Righteous, but as Sinners.*

The Doctor's long Paraphrase on *Rom.* 4. is rather destructive of, than advantagious to Infant-Baptism. *For whilst therein he makes Faith, yea such as enables Men to walk in the Steps of* Abraham's *Faith*, the absolute Condition of the Covenant, &c. he can never make Infants the Sons and Daughters of *Abraham* by Faith; yet he endeavours to do this by telling us, *that the Faith and Consent of the Father, or the God-father, or Congregation under which he was circumcised, was believed of old by the Jews to be imputed to the Child, as his own Faith and Consent*, 1 Maccab. 2. 46. *They had very good Ground, saith he, in Scripture for this their Opinion, because the Infidelity and Disobedience of the Parents in wilfully neglecting or despising Circumcision, was imputed to the Children.* And to strengthen this Jewish Doctrine, he brings *Austin* with his, *accommodat illis Mater Ecclesia aliorum pedes, ut veniant, aliorum cor ut credunt, aliorum Linguam ut fateantur*: To all which very strange Doctrines we reply;

By the Doctor's quoting 1 *Maccab.* 2. 46. it appears that the Canonical Books would afford no Relief for these Jewish Fables. And he that looks upon the place in *Maccabees*, can find no ground to say that the Jews there did circumcise any Children upon the Faith of Parents or God-fathers, for they did not stay for Consent of Parents, but *circumcised them valiantly, or by Force*, as in the Margin, which I take to be a bad Precedent to be brought into the Christian Church, tho God knows they have been too forward in such violent Proceedings. And no less strange and unsound is his Interpretation of *Gen.* 17. 14. where he would make *the Sin of Parents to be imputed to the uncircumcised*

ised Infant. In which he is not so well advised as some Papists; and contrary to the Doctrine of Learned Protestants, who both in this case acquit the Infant both from Sin and Punishment. *Cajetan* (tho a Papist) speaks well, *Consentaneum est*, (saith he) *It is fit that none should be punished but they which had committed the Fault: but Infants can commit no Fault, therefore the Punishment here design'd doth belong only to the grown Persons; for they only are justly punished, who only are justly blamed for the omission of Circumcision.* And Dr. *Willet*, a Protestant, speaks to the same sense, *It is no good reading* (saith he) *to say the uncircumcised Manchild, but* זכר *the Male; for the Infant of eight Days old is of purpose omitted here, though mentioned,* ver. 12. *Hence then is inferred that there was no such absolute necessity of Circumcision, that Children wanting it should be damned.* And saith Mr. *Diodate*, *This is not to be understood of Children, but of those, who by reason of their Age were capable of voluntary Rebellion, refusing or contemning the use of the Sacrament.*

As for *Augustin*, his Church *accommodating Infants with others Feet to come to be baptized, and with the Hearts of others to believe, and the Tongues of others to confess*; it shews that in his Judgment Baptism ought not to be given, but where 'tis sought for, and where there is Faith and Confession going before it. But that one may do these things for another, that is, one believe, and another to be baptized, we will answer it, as *Jerom* did another case, *Non credimus, quia non legimus.* We cannot find it ought to be so, neither in the Old Testament, nor in the New, and therefore we believe it not. And let the Doctor consider whether upon such Presumptions as these, he may not allow the Feet, Heart, and Mouth of others for the Dead, that they also may be baptised, from 2 *Maccab.* 12. 43, 44. The Truth is, should we admit the Dictates of the Doctor, in this and many Parts of his Book, it cannot be avoided but that many Innovations and Superstitions used by the Papists and others would obtrude upon us.

In *page* 6, 7. the Doctor tells us, *That the Gentiles, who were born of Gentiles in* Abraham's *House, or bought with Mony as Servants were, and Blacks are now among us, were the spiritual Seed of* Abraham, *and Children of the Covenant.* And thus also he makes *the Medes, Persians and Idumeans to be constituted in the Jewish Church by Regeneration, as the Church Christian is*; and calls them the *Spiritual Seed of* Abraham, *because they were turned Jews, and lived according to the Ceremonies of the Law.* Which how uncertain these Dictates are, may be seen, when we consider that St. *Paul* says, *the Law is not of Faith*; and that *if*

those

thoſe that are of the Law be Heirs, Faith is made void, and the Promiſe of none Effect. And how Chriſt calls Circumciſion *the Law of Moſes*, and tells the circumciſed Jews themſelves, that *they muſt be regenerated, and born again, or they could not enter into the Kingdom*, (or Goſpel-Church) which ſhews plainly they were not regenerated in Circumciſion, and if they were not, then there is little hopes that their Slaves bought with Mony, as Blacks are now by us, had ſuch benefit by Circumciſion.

Nay, the Doctor is more bold, and tells us, *That always it was underſtood that Children were called and elected by God in their Parents*: which is ſuch a Scripture-leſs Doctrine, and of ſuch dangerous Conſequence, that we cannot but wonder that ſo wiſe a Man ſhould aſſert it. Does not St. *Paul* expreſly teach the contrary, where he ſaith, *The Children of the Fleſh are not the Children of God*: And *that all are not Iſrael, that are of Iſrael*: And *though they be the Seed of* Abraham, *yet are they not all Children.* How was it poſſible that he ſhould think that the Slaves and their Children were elected, only becauſe they were circumciſed, when *Abraham*'s own Poſterity are not therefore elected, becauſe *Abraham was their Father*, and alſo circumciſed.

And will it not follow from the Doctor's Opinion, that Infants are alſo reprobated in their Parents? Yes, he ſays no leſs (I think) when he makes the Unbelievers Infants to differ from thoſe his Elect Infants, as much as the Unbelievers themſelves differ from the circumciſed Parents whom he calls Believers. God be merciful to us, and bleſs us from ſuch Doctrine as this, that his antient way of Truth may be known upon the Earth, and his ſaving Health among the Nations: for *Job* and all holy Men, and poor Infants too which were not circumciſed, might for all that be elected. Seven or eight Pages the Doctor ſpends moſtly to ſhew how Chriſt did alter the *Oeconomy* of the Church in many Particulars, which do not directly concern our preſent Controverſy, in which there are many Dictates unproved, about the Reaſons why Chriſt made this Change. But we ſhall content our ſelves in ſetting down theſe two, which he thinks moved our Lord to lay aſide Circumciſion; and his firſt is, Becauſe *by it the Jewiſh Nation was become odious and ridiculous to all other People upon the account of it.*

But this Paſſage ſeems to caſt a Scandal upon God himſelf, as that he ſhould appoint any thing that ſhould make his People odious. Sure other Nations had Uſages far more offenſive than this could be, in their Idolatrous Services, and particularly the *burning of their Children to Moloch.*

Moloch. But the true reason why it was laid aside, was, because the distinction which it made between the Seed of *Abraham and other People*, as the *Posterity from whence Christ should proceed*, was now unnecessary, because *Christ was born* and manifested to the World: and chiefly because the Ceremonial Law to which it was a strong Obligation, and also a part of it was now to be disannulled and taken out of the way, as an Handwriting of Ordinances, which was against us, and was contrary to us; *Heb.* 7. 18, 19. *Coloss.* 2. 14. *Acts* 15. 10. it was therefore meet it should be taken away.

His second Reason is more tolerable, but yet not true, for though Circumcision was a painful Ordinance, yet the Gospel requires as painful things as that was, of all that will be Christians indeed, as the *denying a Man's self*, and particularly in parting with *House*, *Land*, *Wife*, *Children*, a *right Hand*, a *right Eye*, a *right Foot*, and *our very Life*, when God calls for them, in service to the Defence of the Gospel. Yea, let me tell the Doctor, had he come to Baptism it self, after the Example of Christ, who came from *Galilee* to *Jordan* (I suppose 60 Miles) and that in the depth of Winter, to be dipped in a River, as Christ was in *Jordan*, he might possibly have found it as ungrateful to Flesh and Blood as some have found it to part with their Foreskin; and add to this such Repentance as truly qualifies for the Reception of Baptism, and the whole of it might possibly seem as ridiculous in the Eyes of the wise Men of this World, as Circumcision it self.

We conclude then that the Wisdom of God was great to try the Pride and Haughtiness of Man, in appointing Circumcision in the Time of the Law, to bring Men to Legal Priviledges. And it is no less his Wisdom in appointing Baptism, to bring down the Pride of the greatest Nobles, and most delicate Ladies, (as well as others) by submitting their Bodies under the Hands of a poor Minister to be dipped in Water, at all Seasons, as they are found qualified for it by Faith and Repentance, to admit them to Gospel-Priviledges.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

That the Story of the Jews baptizing Infants, is either a Fable, or if they had ſuch a Humane Tradition, it's rather deſtructive of Sacred Baptiſm, to ground it on that Tradition, than any way advantagious to it.

IN *pag.* 18. the Doctor ſays, "Hitherto I have given the Reaſons of "altering the Jewiſh Oeconomy——But then my Undertaking ob-"liges me to prove that Chriſt and his Apoſtles did build with many "of the old Materials, and conformed their new Houſe as much as "they could after the Platform of the Old. This will appear from "Baptiſm it ſelf, which was a Ceremony by which Proſelytes both "Men and Women and Children were initiated; yet ſo much Re-"ſpect had our Saviour for the antient Orders and Cuſtoms of the "Jewiſh Church, that being obliged to lay by Circumciſion, he con-"ſecrated this inſtead of it (though it were but a meer human In-"ſtitution) to be the Sacrament of Initiation into his Church, and a "Seal of the Righteouſneſs of Faith. So likewiſe the Lord's Supper "was certainly of Jewiſh Original.

Anſwer.

This Doctrine, that Chriſt and his Apoſtles did build their new Houſe of the old Materials of the Jewiſh Church, and that they conform'd their new Houſe as much as they could to the Platform of the Old, ſeems to hold no Agreement with the Doctrine and Practice of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, whether we conſider the Subjects, Ordinances, or Miniſtery of the Church.

The Doctrine and Miniſtery of *John* the Baptiſt, is called *the Beginning of the Goſpel*, Mark 1. 1. And he would not admit of one Stone (or Member of the old Church) as ſuch, to be laid into the Goſpel-Church. Begin not *to ſay within your ſelves, we have* Abraham *to our Father. God is able of theſe Stones to raiſe up Children unto* Abraham. *Bring forth Fruits meet for Repentance. Every Tree which bringeth not forth good Fruit is hewn down.* Matth. 3. So great a Change do we find, that the old Materials, in reſpect of Membership in the new Houſe, would not do, when yet there was but an Introduction, to make ready a People prepared for the Lord.

Chriſt

Christ came to fulfil the Ceremonies of the Law, and to nail them to his Cross, as we have shewed, not to establish them in his Church. But the Truth is, whoever revives them, pulls down his Church. And it were the false Apostles, that would have conformed the Church of Christ to the Platform of the old Jewish Church, *Acts* 15. 5. But the true Apostles withstood them, and decreed that the new Church should observe *no such things*, but they establish what the Light of Grace, and the positive Law of God had made necessary before to all Mankind, *Acts* 15. 23 to 30. *Gen.* 9. 4. This far were the Apostles from building the Church of Christ with Jewish Materials: That as the great *Curcellæus* says, 'The Apostle writ that Epistle to let the Gentiles 'know they were freed from *Moses*'s Law, lest by their hearing him 'read every Sabbath, they might think they were bound to obey his 'Laws. And it is strange that the Doctor should now make *Christ and his Apostles Anabaptists*, as he does, for he will have them to have been *baptised as well as circumcised, to initiate them into the Jewish Church*; and he will have that very Baptism consecrated by Christ instead of Circumcision, to *initiate into his Church*; sure he has little reason to write against Anabaptism, when he is one of the greatest Asserters of it that ever was: but more of this pretended Baptism anon.

St. *Paul* above all the rest, rejects the old Materials, and builds all with new; *Old things are passed away, behold all things are become new*, 2 Cor. 5. *There is verily a disannulling of the Commandment going before for the Weakness and Unprofitableness thereof*, Heb. 7. 18. He calls the whole Mass of Jewish Ceremonies, *Beggarly Elements*. And is it like that he would build the Gospel-Church with such Materials? much less with that supposed Baptism of Jewish Proselytes, or of Jews themselves, which the Doctor knows was at best but of Mans Institution.

Let us view the old Jewish Church, and the new Gospel-Church in a few Particulars briefly. The Members of the Jewish Church were *Natural*, called natural Branches, *Rom.* 11. that is, they were the Seed of *Abraham* according to the Flesh. The Members of the Christian Church *are spiritual*, grafted contrary to Nature into the good Olive, and born of God.

The Circumcision of the Jewish Church was *outward in the Flesh, made with Hands*; The Circumcision of the Gospel-Church is that of *the Heart, in the Spirit, made without Hands, in putting off the Body of the Sins of the Flesh by the Circumcision of Christ*.

Their Sacrifices were carnal, carnal Ordinances, *Heb.* 10. Our Sacrifices are Spiritual, 1 Pet. 2. 2, 3, 4.

Their Ministers were chosen of *one Family or Tribe, and did succeed by natural Descent*; and were Ministers of the Letter. Ours are *given by Christ, in the Front of his Ascension into Heaven*, and are *Ministers of the Spirit*, Ephes. 4.

Their two Sacraments served chiefly to *seal their Right to the Land of Canaan*, and that the Messiah should come of the Seed of *Abraham*, according to the Flesh; and to *commemorate their Deliverance out of Egypt*.

Ours seal *Remission of Sins by Faith in the Blood of Jesus*, and our *Inheritance in the Kingdom of Heaven* to all Eternity.

In short, *Their Services made nothing perfect*, Heb. 10.

Ours present *every Man perfect in Christ Jesus*, Col. 1. 28.

But let us come to this pretended *Infant-Baptism among the Jews*, which is so much made use of by the Doctor, as if it were the very thing that must give Life to Infant-Baptism in the Christian Church. And indeed Dr. *Hammond* (from whom this Doctor seems to borrow much) makes the Jewish baptizing of Proselytes the *Original*, and ours but the *Copy*. That our Saviour should thus highly approve of a Jewish Ceremony, as to consecrate it to be the initiatory Sacrament into his Church, is no way to be believed. For he condemned all such Ceremonies of their own devising to be but vain Worship, *Mat.* 15. 9. and will be then establish this their Tradition (if indeed they had any such)? The Baptism of *John* was that which he established both by his own Submission to it, and Divine Testimony concerning it, *Matth.* 3. 15. & 21. 25. Nor did *John* take up his Baptism from the Jews, as many Learned Men of the Church of *England* do teach of late. For he was a Prophet immediately sent of God to baptize with Water, *John* 1. 33. And he that says *John*'s Baptism was originally of the Jews, as this Doctor and Dr. *Hammond* do teach, denies *John* to be a Prophet, and does dissent herein from many Learned Protestant Writers, whose Testimonies I will therefore here bring against them, who with one Mouth bear witness that *John*'s Ministry and Baptism was Evangelical, and not *Legal*, *Jewish*, or of his own *devising*.

Didacus on *John* 1. 6. *Divine Light being now extinguished, the Son of God himself came into the World to light it again by the Gospel, whereof John the Baptist was the first Preacher.* And on Matth. 11. 13. *John's Prerogative above the precedent Prophets is, that they spoke only foretold and described things to come, but he declared the present Salvation, and by him began the Evangelical Ministry, and the Legal and figurative Ministry ceased.*

ceased. This could not be true, had he taken his Baptism from the Jewish Church.

Dr. *Willet* in his *Synopsis*; *John preached the Baptism of Repentance for the Remission of Sins, which was all one with the Baptism of Peter*, Act. 2. 38. *And it is absurd that Christ the Head, and the Church the Members, should not have the same Baptism.* And *that John's Baptism was not of John's devising, but of God's Appointment*, Dr. *Fulk* on *Mat.* 3.

Dr. *Fulk*, *John by his Doctrine and Baptism prepared a way to Christ, not to the Baptism of Christ, for he preached not his own Baptism, but the washing away of Sins by Christ. Therefore he also was a Minister of the Baptism of Christ.*

This new Device of founding the Christian Baptism upon Jewish Baptism is dangerous, opening a Gap to the Quakers, and other Notionists to condemn it as a Legal Ceremony. Yet the Doctor boldly tells us, *That Christ was obliged to lay by Circumcision, and consecrated this Ceremony* (used by the Jews) *instead of it.* The Enemies of Christ durst not say as Dr. *Hammond* and this Doctor does say, that the Baptism of *John* was of *Jewish Original.* They knew such a Speech must deny *John to be a Prophet.* And yet these Learned Men have not Learning enough to consider this.

We know the Pharisees were very zealous for the Traditions of the Jewish Church, but it's certain they had no Zeal for the Baptism of Repentance, for they rejected it against themselves, *Luke* 7. 30. And here this holy Ordinance is expressly called the Counsel of God, which shews it was not originally a Rite or Ceremony of humane Institution, or Jewish Ceremony.

But now let us see whether the Doctor may not possibly be mistaken in asserting that the Jews had such a Ceremony as Baptism among them before *John* Baptist came. And in this Enquiry we will prefer a Learned Protestant of the Church of *England*, who writes thus:

"As to their Argument who would have our Baptism to be derived from the Jewish Lotions, as there is nothing of certainty in it, so it is so far from being grounded on any Authority in Scripture, that there are hardly any Footsteps to be found thereof in the Old Testament. They deduce the Original of Baptism from the Hebrew word טבל, which signifies to wash or cleanse. But the Rabbins, if I am not deceived, use the Hebrew word שטף, which signifies Immersion, thereby making it appear that they owe the Notion of the Word to the Greeks, or rather to the Christians. For what affinity is there between Lotion and Immer-

Sir *Norton Knatchbul.*

"Immersion? But the thing is so uncertain, that it cannot be said "of the Rabbins, that there were not several among them who "differed very much about this matter.——

"For in the very place cited by the forementioned Learned Men, "*Rabbi Eliezer* expresly contradicts *Rabbi Joshua*, who was the first "that I know of, who asserted this sort of Baptism among the "Jews. Now to whom shall I give credit? To *Eliezer*, who asserts "what the Scripture confirms [meaning that *Proselytes were not bapti-* "*zed*] or to *Joshua*, who affirms what is no where to be found in Scrip- "ture [meaning this pretended Baptism is *not to be found in Scripture.*] "But the Rabbins upheld *Joshua*'s side, and what wonder was it? for "it made for their business, that is, for the Honour of the Jewish Re- "ligion, *That the Christians should borrow their Ceremonies*, [how im- prudent then is the Author of the Book we are answering, to give this Advantage to the Jews against the Christians.] "But when I "see Men of great Learning fetching the Foundation of Truth from "the *Rabbins*, I cannot but hesitate a little. For whence was this "*Talmud* sent to us,——that we should give so much credit thereto——? "for the *Talmud* is called a *Labyrinth of Errors, and the Foundation of* "*Jewish Fables.* [This is then a Fault in the Church of *England* Doctors to fly hither for Refuge for Infant-Baptism.] "It was brought to Per- "fection 500 years after Christ. [This shews the danger of trusting to it, it being so lately confirmed.] "Therefore it is unreasonable to rest "upon the Testimony of it. And that which moves me most, *Jose-* "*phus*——who was also a Jew, and contemporary with *Rabbi Eliezer*, "who also wrote in particular of the Rites, Customs and Acts of "the Jews, *is altogether silent in this matter.* [He knew no baptising of Infants among the Jews] "So that it is an Argument to me next to a "Demonstration, that two such eminent Persons, both Jews, and li- "ving at the same time, the one should *positively deny*, the other *make* "*no mention* of Baptism among the Jews.

"Besides, if Baptism in the modern sense were in use among the "Jews in antient times, why did the Pharisees ask *John* Baptist, *Why* "*dost thou baptize, if thou be not Christ, nor Elias, nor that Prophet?* "Do they not plainly intimate, that Baptism was not in use before, "and that it was a received Opinion among them, that there should "be no Baptism till either *Christ*, or *Elias*, or that *Prophet* came? How "then there should be so much affinity between Baptism and the Di- "vings of the Jews, that the one should be successive to the other by "any Right or Pretence, is altogether I confess, beyond my Faith.

It

It appears from this learned Man's Discourse, that there is no Ce-
rtainty that the Jews had any such Baptizing of Infants, or others, as
he Doctor pretends. However, God having appointed no such
hing in the Jewish Church, leaves such a Practice (if they had it)
without any Authority to govern Christians in their Administration
f Baptism. Nor do we who assert the Ordinance according to the
cripture, need to run for Counsel to the Jews *Talmud*, *Gemara*, and
Maimonides. And indeed it looks too much like going to the *Witch*
f Endor, and to *Baalzebub* the God of *Ekron* for Knowledg, as if there
were not sufficient Instruction in the undoubted Word of God, how
or to whom to dispence the first Ordinance of the Gospel to a poor
Convert. And it is a sure sign that the Doctor and all that make such
a noise about this *Rabbinical* Learning to justify their Practice of
Infant Baptism, are conscious to themselves that they have no sure
Footing in God's Word for it.

And yet so partial are our *Talmudists*, that they will not follow its
Directions for the manner of Baptism, which as Dr. *Hammond* shews
is commonly expressed by —— *Immersion*, never by ——, that is,
Aspersion or Sprinkling, for such as will not be ruled by the Rules given
in the Holy Scripture, how should they be true to any of their Books?

One thing I marvel at, p. 20. where the Doctor tells his Reader that
the Anabaptists endeavour to shift off the forces of many good Arguments,
by saying Circumcision under the Old Testament was a Type of Baptism un-
der the New. For this I take to be a great Mistake of the Doctor,
I never heard of any whom he calls Anabaptists, who hold Cir-
cumcision to be a Type of Baptism at all. But I have met with di-
vers of the Church of *England*, who have affirmed it to be a Type of
Baptism; so that all that the Doctor says upon this Mistake about
which he spent some Pages, is nothing to the purpose. For we own
no other Antitype of Circumcision, but the Circumcision of the
Heart, called *the Circumcision of Christ made without Hands*.

But had he minded well his own Books, he might have seen Mr
Philpot asserting the thing which he would charge upon us, where he
saith, *The Apostles did attemper all their things to the Shadows and Fi-*
gures of the Old Testament. Therefore it is certain they did attemper as
Baptism to Circumcision, and have its Children because they were under the
Figure of Baptism, for the People of Israel passed through the Red Sea, &c.
Where I think he makes both Circumcision, and passing through the
Sea, to be Shadows and Types of Baptism; which is yet more evident,
because (a little before) he tells us that *Paul calls Baptism the Circum-*
cision

Cision made without Hands. Which though it be not true, seeing all Men know, and Mr. *Philpot* cannot deny but Baptism is made by Hands, yet it shews that he looked upon Baptism to be the Antitype of Circumcision. But I shall not fight with dead Men, otherwise I might shew his Mistake in saying that the Apostles did attemperate all their Doings to the Shadows and Figures of the Old Testament; but this we have shewed before, to be an unsound Speech.

The Doctor seems to deal unfairly with *Col.* 2. 11, 12. *Circumcision* (saith he) *hath nothing in it Symbolical of Baptism, and denies it to be in umbratical, but a real Confignation of the Covenant of Grace*; quoting the Text thus, *In whom also they are circumcised*, with the Circumcision made without Hands, in putting off the *Body of the Sins of the Flesh* by the *Circumcision of Christ*, *Having been buried with him in Baptism*. Does not the Doctor by this Addition to the Text, assert the thing which he would deny, or else denies what *Paul* asserts, for St. *Paul* does make Circumcision a Shadow or Figure of the Circumcision of Christ made without Hands, why else does he call the Work of Grace in the Heart by that Name of Circumcision, as he also doth, *Rom.* 2. 29? But the Doctor does refer this Circumcision to Baptism, *having been buried with him in Baptism*: but then if this be his meaning, Circumcision must needs have something in it umbratical of Baptism, which yet he denies, and therein contradicts Mr. *Philpot*, who affirms even Baptism to be the Circumcision made without Hands.

The Truth is, this Text can never be made serviceable to Infant-Baptism, as Mr. *Philpot* and the Doctor would have it; seeing no more are here said to be baptized, than had put off the Body of the Sins of the Flesh. Nor, as we have it, *Rom.* 6. no more are here buried with Christ in Baptism, than were dead with him. And this alone might serve to shew that God expects not that Infants should be baptized, seeing they can neither die to Sin, nor live to Newness of life, and to what purpose they should be buried before they be dead, no good reason can be shewed.

Here we are told again, that *Circumcision was a real Confignation of the Covenant of Grace, every way as real and substantial an Ordinance as Baptism is now.* It is only called a Seal in the Special case of *Abraham*. And if it was every way as real and substantial as Baptism is now, to what end were the Circumcised baptized also in the Jewish Church, as the Doctor says they were? And why does *Paul* call it a beggarly Element? And how could it be the Yoke of Bondage, or the Obligation to it, and a Seal of the Covenant of Grace too? A Seal or Sign of

of the Covenant of Grace frees Men from the Yoke of Bondage; and of this, Evangelical Baptism is a real and substantial Consignation, where the Subject is qualified for it. Had Circumcision been such a real and substantial Ordinance to consign the Covenant of Grace, it would not have ceased, if St. *Paul*'s Argument hold, *Heb.* 10. 1, 2. But it is abolished as well as other Ceremonies of the Law, which as a sign it did not make the Comers thereunto perfect, any more than the other Legal Ceremonies. Whereas had it consign'd the Covenant of Grace, more could not be expected from a ritual to make the Subjects of it perfect. And this Perfection have the Ordinances of the Gospel, as we have shewed before, but here the Ceremonies of the Law failed.

CHAP. III.

Wherein the Doctor's first Question is answered, viz.

Whether Infants are capable of Baptism?

THE Doctor counts it *Rashness to deny Infants to be capable of Baptism*, and saith, *Nothing can reflect more Dishonour upon the Wisdom of God, and the Practice of the Jewish Church.* And the Sum of what he brings to prove them capable of Baptism, is to repeat what he has said before, about *the Identity of the Covenant of Circumcision, and that which is made with us in the Gospel*; and concludes, that *because Infants were admitted to Circumcision, therefore they are to be admitted to Baptism*; and affirms, *that Circumcision was as proper an Ordinance as Baptism, yea, that it was a Gospel-Ordinance.*

If therefore I repeat the same things which I have said before, the Reader will (I hope) bear with that; for Answer then, I say, though we deny not but that the Covenant of Circumcision did comprehend all those Dignities which pertain'd to *Abraham*, for the Greatness of his Faith, to be the Father of many Nations; yet every Man that reads and considers the Tenor of the Covenant, as set down, *Gen.* 17. may easily see those things belonged to none but him, and therefore Circumcision could seal the Righteousness of Faith in those peculiar Promises, whether we consider *the numerousness of his Seed*, or that

Christ should be born of his Seed, and so the *Nations blessed in his Seed*) but to *Abraham* only, because none of these Promises were made to any but to him.

We have also shewed how and in what respects the Covenant of Circumcision could not be the Covenant of Grace, because *none but* Abraham's *Family was bound to keep it*; not damned, no not blamed, if they did not enter into it: but the case is otherwise with the Gospel; for now God *commandeth* (by the Gospel) *all Men every where to repent, and he that believeth not the Gospel* (when made known to him) *shall be damned*.

Can it enter into the Doctor's Heart to think that all the World was now left under Condemnation without Mercy, except *Abraham* and his Family? Surely it was not in the Days of *Abraham*, as it was in the Days of *Noah*, as if God had only found *Abraham* righteous before him in all the Earth. No we have proved there were other righteous Men, and some superiour to *Abraham* himself: wherefore God's peculiar Kindness to *Abraham*, did not argue that God had rejected, and taken the Covenant of Grace from all the World besides, but it is certainly a presumptuous way of arguing, that because God made Infants of eight days old capable of Circumcision, by his Command to circumcise them, that therefore we ought to take them to be capable of Baptism, tho we have no Command to baptize them; and then fly to the Identity of the Covenants to make it good, when there is no Identity at all to be found between them. But to conclude a little.

Let us now suppose (for Argument sake) that the Covenant of Circumcision was the Covenant of Grace, as the Doctor would have it; yet it will not follow that an Interest in the Covenant of Grace does infer an immediate Right always, either to Circumcision or Baptism: and this the Doctor must grant, because Infants of five, six, or seven days old had an Interest in the Covenant made with *Abraham*, and yet had no right to Circumcision till the eighth day. Also the Infants of the other Patriarchs had an Interest in the Covenant of Grace, yet had no right to Circumcision at all. Nor could they, nor the Patriarchs themselves, be cut off from the Covenant of Grace, tho they were not circumcised. And all the Females of *Abraham*'s Family had Interest in the Covenant of Grace, but had no right to Circumcision; and the reason was, God did not appoint them to be circumcised. And yet so foolish have some Nations been as to circumcise Females without any command from God, and therefore its less strange

strange that Men now force on their Superstition of Infant Baptism, without God's Command also.

But what if all the Infants in the World be under the Mercy of the new Covenant, as it respects the Abolition of the condemning Power of Original Sin, and Gift of eternal Life: as I think whatever the Doctor says at some turns, yet he will grant me this (at least for the substance of it) for all that die in Infancy; yet he will not say that all Infants in the World in *Abraham's* time, who were Males, ought to be circumcised, or that all Infants in the World since Christ's time are to be baptized. And therefore suppose the Covenant of Grace before, in, and since the Law, to be the same, yet it's clear that an immediate Right to the Mercy of the Covenant, (in the sense before explained) does not infer an immediate right to partake of Ordinances, but some other particular Qualifications; and God's Direction must give immediate right to participate of them, or else we act and do we know not what.

Let us then calmly consider what were the necessary Qualifications for Circumcision, and what are the necessary Qualifications for Baptism, and then we shall soon be able to answer this Question, *Whether Infants are capable of Baptism.* Infants Qualifications for Circumcision were these; They must be the Seed of *Abraham* according to the Flesh, or born in his House, or bought with Money, or the Children of Proselytes, and they must be Males; and they must be eight days old, else they could not lawfully be circumcised; I say, it was not all Infants (as such) that might lawfully be circumcised, but Infants under such Circumstances or Qualifications. Wherefore in the next place let us consider the indispensible Qualifications for Baptism.

And here I shall chiefly make use of that Text, *Col.* 2. 11, 12. so much insisted on by the Doctor, with its parallel place, *Rom.* 6. 1, 2, 3. From these Texts it plainly appears that Baptism is a mystical Burial; and therefore every one of the faln Race of Mankind which are lawfully baptized, are *buried with Christ in Baptism.* So then there is an indispensible Necessity that all who are to be thus buried, be first dead; for it is directly against these Scriptures, and against all Reason and Religion, to bury any Person before they be dead.

The Question therefore is what Death is here meant. It cannot be a *corporal Death*, for then none but dead Bodies should be baptized, which is absurd. Nor can it be a *Death in Sin*; for if that did qualify for Baptism, then all unregenerate Persons were fit Subjects for Baptism, but that also is absurd: It must therefore *be a Death to Sin, and to*

the Rudiments of the World. And thus does St. *Paul* himself expound it; *How shall we that are dead to Sin, live any longer therein*, Rom. 6. 11. *Wherefore reckon your selves to be dead indeed unto Sin, but alive unto God.* Col. 2. 20. *Dead with Christ from the Rudiments of the World.* This is that Death which is so absolutely necessary to the Baptismal Covenant, that the Doctor knows it to be granted by the Church of *England*, that Repentance whereby we forsake Sin, (which is the same thing which St. *Paul* calls a Death to Sin) is required of all that are to be baptized.

Another indispensible Qualification, is, every Subject of Baptism ought first to be a Child of God by Faith in Christ Jesus; or to be a new Creature. Hence it is said of the whole Church Militant, *Ye are all the Sons of God by Faith in Christ Jesus*; for *as many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ*, Gal. 3. And as every Member of this Church is said to be buried with Christ in Baptism; so they are *said therein to be risen with him through Faith.* And to this also the Church of *England* gives Testimony, *that Faith is required of all that are to be baptized*, even such Faith as whereby the *Promises of God made in that Sacrament are stedfastly to be believed.* And that it's necessary the Party baptized be a new Creature, they boldly affirm, when they have sprinkled the Infant, (when perhaps fast asleep) *that he is born of the Spirit*, &c. And that to be born again, is a necessary Qualification for Baptism. The Word of God is clear, *Tit.* 3. where Baptism is called *the Washing of Regeneration.* And St. *Peter* calls it the Answer of a good Conscience. And unto this Doctrine all the ancient Writers of Christianity agree with full consent.

And for Brevities sake, as also because *Augustine* is thought to be as eminent as any of the Fathers that were before him, and more eminent then any that did succeed him, I will content my self with his Testimony, who saith, *Per fidem renascimur in Baptismate*; by Faith we are born again in *Baptism*, *Serm.* 53. And again, *Primo fides Catholica Christiano necessaria est, per ipsum renascimur in baptismate & Salutem æternam impetramus*; first of all the Catholick Faith is necessary for all Christians, by the which in Baptism we are born again to obtain eternal Salvation.

And that Infants have not Faith, he testifies in these Words; *Si illis minati essent ipsum Baptismum tali susciperent, cui videmus eos cum magnis fletibus reluctari.*

From these Premises I think we may safely conclude that Infants are not capable of Baptism; for what Man with any Truth or Fairness

ness of Discourse is ever able to bring Infants under these Qualifications, or to shew that Baptism may lawfully be administred to Persons of whom we can have no Knowledg, nor Evidence from themselves, that there is any thing of these Prerequisites to Holy Baptism, but as far as they are able (*Augustine* being witness) they do oppose and withstand it. *If Infants were illuminate, they would gladly receive Baptism, which we see them strive against with great crying.*

Now all that *Augustine*, the Church of *England*, or the Doctor can say in this case, amounts but to this; That Infants do perform this Repentance, and Faith by their Godfathers, &c. which is so poor an Answer, so destitute of Divine Warrant, that it is to be lamented, that ever wise Men should satisfy themselves with such a Speech, as no Man can know to be true, but by all Experience is found to be false, insomuch that no Man could ever yet (I suppose) give Thanks to God for that Faith and Repentance which their Godfathers performed for them, nor do the Godfathers themselves know that they do the Infant any good, in or by any Supply the Infant does receive from them in respect of Repentance or Faith.

But p. 24. the Doctor proceeds thus: *If the relative Nature of Circumcision, considered as a Sacrament, was the same under the Law that Baptism is under the Gospel, it must needs follow, that Children under the Gospel are as capable of this (supposing no new Command to exclude them) as under the Law they were of that.*

But by the Doctor's favour we do not exclude Children from Baptism, but bring them to it as soon as lawfully we can, but we must not make more haste than good speed, nor outrun the Rule which God has given to direct us. Now these Words [Exclude Infants from Baptism] are rather scandalous than pertinent. Does the Doctor exclude Children from the Lord's Table, because he does not bring them to Communion there in their Infancy? sure he does what he can to bring them to obey God in that Ordinance with what speed he lawfully may, and so do we in the case of Baptism. As for the relative Nature of *Circumcision*, though it was no Absurdity to make Infants Members of the Jewish Church by it, when God had them do so; yet had any Man taken upon him to have made them Members of the Church in the old World by such a Sign, it would have been absurd enough. It was no Absurdity for *Abraham* to offer up his Son *Isaac*, to slay him with his own Hand, when God did command it: but it would be Absurdity to purpose for us to do so, having no such Command; and yet we are to sacrifice all that's dear to us, even our

own Lives, but it muſt be in ſuch a way as God requireth. This talk therefore of the relative Nature of Circumciſion is very vain; we ſay did the Lord require us to baptize our Infants, and to give them the Communion, there could be no Abſurdity in either, but then he would have diverſified the time for Participation of theſe Ordinances, as he did in the caſe of Circumciſion for the 8th day; though it was the preciſe time for the Admiſſion of Infants, yet it was no rule at all to the *Adults*. Shew now that God has required Baptiſm at a preciſe day to the younger ſort, and prefixt no preciſe day of Age to the elder ſort (for thus he did in the Circumciſion) and the Diſpute will ſoon end.

Circumciſion did relate neceſſarily to all Servants bought with Mony in *Abraham*'s Houſe, as Members of his Houſe, but the caſe is not ſuch in Baptiſm. And it was yet never proved that thoſe Perſons who were thus circumciſed, were to be qualified for it by Faith and Repentance; but it rather ſeems to have been done at firſt in *Abraham*'s Houſe, either in Obedience to *Abraham*'s Authority over them, as his Bondmen, Servants, or Child; or elſe by plain force: for ſeeing *Abraham* circumcifed all his that very day, they had little time to have Faith and Repentance wrought in them; nor is there one word of *Abraham*'s preaching any thing to them. But 'tis ſaid, *He took* Iſmael *his Son and circumciſed him, and all that were born in his Houſe, and all that were bought with Mony, —— every Male —— the ſelf-ſame day.* Here was bloody Work; and Dr. *Willit* thinks the Number of the *Males was ſo many that* Abraham *could not circumciſe them in one day, and that he uſed the help of others to do it.* And what Faith and Repentance could be expected from *Iſhmael* at 13 Years of Age, eſpecially conſidering that he was not the Child of Promiſe, nor to have the Covenant eſtabliſhed with him.

And who will ſay that *Abraham*, or the Jewiſh Church either, had any Commiſſion from God to teach all Nations, circumciſing them? this way he never went; but if he bought any of them, them he would and did circumciſe. And where is the new Birth made the Qualification for Circumciſion? No Man can give an Inſtance of it. But nothing is more common in the caſe of Baptiſm: ſurely the plain Truth in ſhort is this: *Circumciſion did relate generally to a carnal Seed, and to a Terreſtrial Inheritance; but Baptiſm relates only to a ſpiritual Seed, and a Celeſtial Inheritance.*

And let not the Doctor reflect upon us (as he does *p.* 27.) but we pray the Doctor to conſider whether God was not as wiſe, and had as great

great Goodneſs for, and care of Infants, and others too, from *Adam* to *Abraham*, as from *Abraham* till Chriſt's time. And yet the Doctor knows there was no outward ſign appointed for initiating Infants, as the Doctor ſpeaks: and wherein does it appear that God was more gracious to Infants by or through Circumciſion, than he was to the Infants of the other Patriarchs? The Fathers tell us (as quoted by learned Proteſtants) *that Circumciſion did not profit the Soul of the Infant; nihil animæ Circumciſionem illam profuiſſe.* Chryſoſt. Hom. 39. in *Gen.* And yet the Wiſdom of God was great in appointing Circumciſion ſo early (ſeeing it muſt be the Mark to diſtinguiſh the Family of which Chriſt ſhould be born, *&c.*) for the pain was more eaſy to be born in Infancy, than when they attained to Manhood.

Neither is it by any means to be ſuppoſed, that God by giving this Ceremony to *Abraham*, &c. did neglect all the Infants in the World, as to the Buſineſs of Salvation (which I muſt mention, becauſe the Doctor ever and anon is dropping ſuch Paſſages as may deceive his Reader with ſuch Apprehenſions, though I am ſure the Doctor does believe no ſuch thing.) He was ſtill the God of the Spirits of all Fleſh, and all Infants were ſtill his Offspring; and never rebelling againſt him, his gracious Nature would not ſuffer them to periſh without Remedy, and Remedy they could have none by Circumciſion; for it was not appointed for them. And indeed to conceit our ſelves, that our wiſe and good God ſhould make either Circumciſion or Baptiſm (or any other Ritual) neceſſary to the Salvation of poor dying Infants, is a poor low conceit of God, and contrary to all Rules which he has given to Men to extend Mercy or Juſtice. For ſeeing it is not poſſible for them to have the one or the other, but at the Will of others, God's ways are ſo equal that he will never puniſh them for want of either: but the Truth is he required the firſt but of a few in compariſon, and the latter not ſo much as of one Infant: whence then is there ſuch a quoil about Infant-Baptiſm?

One great Pretence of the Doctor for Infant-Baptiſm, *is taken from the ends of Baptiſm, ſome of which he will have Infants to be capable of, and therefore to be baptized.* This is the ſum of what he ſays in a multitude of Words in ſeveral Pages. But upon a right Diſcovery of the ends of Baptiſm, as they are really ſuch, his *Antecedent* will vaniſh.

The Ends of Baptiſm (be they what they will) are to be conſidered in ſuch a ſenſe, as that ordinarily without Baptiſm ſuch things cannot be obtained. And of theſe ends, Remiſſion of Sins, and

eternal

Eternal Life are the principal, *Acts* 2. 38. *Mark* 16. 16. Now where-ever, or upon whomsoever God calls for Obedience in Holy Baptism, as the way in which these Ends are by them to be obtained, there the Duty of Baptism being refused, these Ends are lost; as appears in the Case of the Pharisees and Lawyers, *Luke* 7. 29. *They rejected the Counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized.*

Now I deny that Remission of Sins, and Eternal Life, are propounded to, or in the Case of Infants, *as the Ends of Baptism.* They have Remission (so far as they need it) and Eternal Life, upon other Terms, even the free Mercy of God in Christ, *Rom.* 5. 18. And the good will of God towards them, *Mat.* 18. 14. And if Infants are uncapable of these, *as they are the Ends of Baptism*, so they will be uncapable of all other Things which are annexed to Baptism, *as the Ends of that Ordinance*. As we will propose two, *viz.* the *washing of Regeneration*, and *incorporating into Christ*; Infants are capable of neither of these, *as they are the Ends of Baptism.* For, Baptism is but demonstrative, or a Sign of the New Birth; because God will have those that come to be baptized, therein to testify, that they have, and therein symbolically do *put off the Body of the Sins of the Flesh*, which Work had its Effect from the Word and Spirit of God. And, 2. to be incorporated with Christ, *as it is an End of Baptism*, does necessarily presuppose, a being taken out of the Tree that is wild by Nature, or out of our degenerate Estate, and planted contrary to that Nature, by a willing resignation of Soul and Body to Christ, in that solemn ministration of Baptism. And how incapable Infants are of this, all Men must needs see. To be short, if it could be proved by the Word of God, or found true by Experience, that Infants are capable of any Good; or, that the Will of God was wrought by baptizing them, I could yield to the Doctor: but the Truth is, they are capable of none of the Ends of Baptism, *as God hath annexed them to Baptism*, and therefore his Argument must come to nothing. And how easy were it to turn this Argument against him in the Case of the Lord's Supper, but that may be more fitting in another place.

But the Doctor says, *p.* 28. *That Infants are capable of all the Ends of Baptism, as Baptism is instituted for a Sign from God towards us, to assure us of his gracious Favour, and to consign unto us the Benefits of the Covenant of Grace.*

Now, if this Doctrine be true, then either Baptism is a sure Sign of all these Things to all Infants, or to some few of them only: The former the Doctor will not allow; and yet he cannot but know,

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when Christ said, *Teach all Nations, baptizing them*, he makes no difference between one Person and another, all are equally to be taught, and baptized equally upon the same Terms. And if the Doctor will have some Infants only to have an *Interest in the Benefits of the Covenant of Grace*, and therefore but some only have right to Baptism, which consigns the Covenant of Grace, we shall desire him to prove this well, and therewithal to let us know how he knows one sort of these Infants from another. He says, indeed, *That Infants may be Members of a Church* (their Childhood notwithstanding) *as well as of a Family*, &c. But to be of a Family, is equally natural to all Infants; so that if this Argument prove any thing, it proves all Infants Church-Members as much as any. *Nor*, saith he, *does Childhood hinder or incapacitate them for being adopted the Children of God, more than the Children of any other Person.*

But God is not like Man to adopt (or receive into favour) some poor Infants, and let all the rest perish without favour: We affirm, that God has in Mercy taken care of all Infants, (as we have proved): But this does not teach us to do that to some of them which he never commanded, and to reject the rest, as if God had no Mercy for them. These Notions are so partial, and so uncertain, that no solid Comfort can be taken from them. And *let my Infant*, (whom I confess I have not baptized, but only devoted him to God's Mercy and Protection by Prayer) and *the Doctor's Infant* (whom he has crossed and sprinkled) be laid together, I am perswaded the Doctor would tremble to say, this Infant is an adopted Child of God, and in his Favour; that Infant is rejected, and out of God's Favour: And truly I cannot but think such Discourses as these, proceed not from the bottom of the Heart, but Men please themselves to dream waking, of I know not what Favour Almighty God has for their Infants, above what he has for others.

The Doctor's next way is to make use of Similitudes, as thus; *Should a Prince adopt a Beggar's Child, and incorporate him into the Royal Family, and settle a part of his Dominions upon him; and to solemnize and confirm all this, should cut off a bit of his Flesh, or command him to be washed with Water; who would count this an insignificant Ceremony, or Solemnity? or say, that the Child was not capable of the Sign, when he was capable of the chief thing signified thereby?*

Surely such *flourishes* as this, may soon deceive those that rest upon them. For, 1. here is no qualification in this Child, nor any required of it in this case; but every Beggar's Child is as capable of this

Favour

Favour as this Child: and consequently this makes no more for the Infant of an English Man, than of an Indian; God may be as kind to the one as to the other. 2. Here's the King's Act of Grace peculiar to this Child, and to no other. 3. Here's the King's express Command, to cut off a bit of the Child's Flesh, or to wash it with Water. And thus the whole of the Matter is begg'd; but not any proof for Infant Baptism ministred from hence; for we grant, that the Things here supposed to be done, do sufficiently capacitate the Beggar's Child for the Mercy and Favour of the Prince; but then it as much incapacitates other Children, to whom the King has extended no such pity, and concerning whom he has given no such order; for should the Doctor now, without any Order from the King, fetch all the Beggars Children in the City and Country, and pass all these Solemnities upon them, that they all may be received into the Royal Family, &c. I suppose he would have but little thanks for his labour: even so to *cross*, *sprinkle*, or *dip* all the Infants in the World, [and either all or none have right to it] and to adopt them thus to be of the Family of Heaven, without Heaven's Authority to make them capable of it, and God's Direction in the Business of the Solemnity, will not please God. We therefore content our selves to commit our Infants to his Mercy and Protection, in the way of humble Prayer for his Blessing; and for this we have his own Son, our Lord, to go before us, who thus does suffer little Children to come unto him, without rejecting so much as one of them.

The Doctor's next Similitude proceeds thus; *Suppose a Prince should send for an attainted Traitor's Child, and say——You know the Blood of this Child is attainted by his Father's Treason; by Law he has forfeited all right to his Father's Estate——My Bowels of Compassion yearn upon him, and here I restore him——and before you all wash him with pure Water, to signify that he is cleansed—and restored to his Birth-right——Could any Man say that the Action was insignificant, because the Child knew nothing of it?*

Now in this Similitude, the Doctor begs almost every thing in question between us. As, 1. That all that are attainted with Original Sin, must be washed with Water, as a sign that they are cleansed from it. 2. That God vouchsafes the Bowels of Compassion to such Infants only as he intends shall be baptized. 3. That he does not require the Party baptized to understand or take notice of any thing, but bids the by-standers take notice of these Things. And, 4. this Similitude supposes, that all Rules about Infant Baptism are plainly

delivered by our Heavenly King, when not one of these things are true. But the Doctor does very ill to suppose that to be a true Gospel-Sacrament, which wants the *inward and spiritual Grace*, as in this Similitude there is no knowledg or consent on the part of him that is baptized, but a meer force is put upon him. And yet when the Doctor can shew us what Infants in particular the Bowels of God does yearn towards, and his Will that they be cleansed by washing with Water, that shall suffice to make them capable of Baptism.

But before we leave this Similitude, let us consider whether the Foundation of it be sound. Are Infants indeed such attainted Persons? Sure no; for whatsoever was their Case considered in mere *Adam*, yet when through Christ *Adam* was redeemed (that is, virtually, by the Promise of a Saviour, *Gen.* 3. 15.) all Infants who then were all in him, had the Attainder taken off, as much as from *Adam* himself, *John* 1. 29. So that this Attainder of Treason against Infants, as they proceed from *Adam*, is but a Fancy; and to think that he has left Original Sin to be washed away by Baptism, from poor innocent Babes, is another Fancy; and yet these were the Grounds on which Infant Baptism was built at first, and many are yet under the dominion of this Mistake.

We conclude then, that through the free Mercy of God in the Gift of Christ, the Attainder of Sin which lay against Infants to Condemnation, was taken away from the Foundation of the World; and that Baptism was not ordained of God to take away Original Sin, but for the Remission of Actual Sins upon Repentance and Faith. Nor does it appear, in all God's Book, that he appointed any *Ritual*, as not Circumcision it self, to take away Original Sin; and he that shall assert it, will be intangled in so many Difficulties, as he cannot escape. For what then took Original Sin from all Males that died before the eighth Day? And what became of all Females and Male Infants throughout the World? Did God leave them all under a Malady, without any Remedy?

And though the Doctor insists never so much upon that Apocryphal Story of Infant Baptism among the Jews, before the coming of *John Baptist*, yet as himself yields, *p.* 18. *it was not of Divine Institution*; so it is looked upon to be a Fable by the Learned of his own Church, who tell us, as we have shewed, That *Rabbi Eliezer denies, that there was any such Baptism among the Jews*, though *Rabbi Joshua does affirm it*. To whom shall I give credit, (saith that Learned Protestant) to *Eliezer*, *who asserted what the Scripture confirms*, [that there

was no such Baptism among the Jews] *or to Joshua, who assume what is no where to be found in Scripture?*

I am not concerned in their answer, *who do prove Infants more capable of Circumcision than of Baptism, because it left a Character in their Flesh.* But I answer, whatsoever makes any Person capable of Baptism, the revealed Will of God to order it so is the chief; as for Example, some Infants might be as capable of Circumcision on the 6th day, as others on the 8th, yet those of 7 days were not at all capable of Circumcision. So that for Men to insist upon their Conjectures, about Infants Capacity or Incapacity, is but to wander in the Dark. It must be the Institution of Baptism, the Commission for the use of it in all Nations, and the Example of Christ and his Apostles, and Churches by them constituted, that must decide this Question, *Whether Infants are capable of Baptism?*

CHAP. IV.

Answereth the Doctor's second Question; Whether Infants are excluded from Baptism?

AND here in the first place (saith the Doctor) I must observe that the Question ought to be proposed in these Terms, and not *whether Christ hath commanded Infants to be baptized? For as a good Author observes of the River* Nile, *we ought not to ask the Reason why Nile overflows so many days about the Summer Solstice? But why it doth not overflow all the Year long?*

But by his Favour he is as wise a Man that asks the first Question, as he that asks the second. And I know but one Answer to be given to both, and that is chiefly and before all things, It is the Will of God to order it so. Now let this be apply'd to the case in hand; And the Will of God shall determine, who are, and who are not to be baptized.

And let the Doctor here resolve me, whether God excluded Infants of 6 or 7 days old from Circumcision, when yet there is no negative Law, *you shall not circumcise them*; and he will soon answer his own Question: For his Answer must be, seeing God did not appoint Infants of 7 days old to be circumcised, therefore he did not admit them

them to it; and our Answer is the same, Christ did not command us to baptize Infants, therefore he does not admit them to it. And it is observed by some learned Men, that the Negative Commands do usually exclude, yet it is also true that an Institution of God, and an affirmative Command does exclude all that is above or besides that Command and Institution. And they bring *Levit.* 10. 1, 2. to justify what they say: For *Nadab* and *Abihu* came to a dismal end. And such *Disciples*, *Though the Command was not given before, yet it was a Sin, in undertaking the contrary before God's mind was known.* And so may the Doctor find the same Acceptance, in going where he has no Law to direct him, though there were an negative to forbid him; however we dare not follow him because we fear the Lord, who if *we add to his Word, will reprove both him and us.* Prov. 30. 6.

But here again the Doctor would build his Infant-Baptism upon that Jewish Tradition of baptizing the Infants of Proselytes, though he knows they had no Authority from Heaven for it. And we have shewed from a learned Author in chap. 2. that it's very probable there was no such thing. And it's very strange that the Doctor or others should suffer themselves to be thus deluded from the Simplicity of the Gospel by the Jews *Talmud*, which the Learned *Buxtorf* explodes with such Indignation: *Whence* (saith he) *was the Talmud first to us, that from thence we should think that the Law of Moses either can or ought to be understood, much less the Gospel, which they were professed Enemies unto?*

And yet now this is become one of the chief Refuges of the Doctor, and of Dr. *Hammond* before him, for the Support of Infant-Baptism. And it's strange that the Doctor should hope by such Arguments to bring any Credit to the cause of Infant Baptism. He might as well have referred us to the Turkish *Alcoran*, where divers Washings are also mentioned.

Page 32, 33. Upon this tottering Foundation the Doctor builds divers Suppositions; as first, *That if Christ had not changed the Seal of the Covenant, but had said, Go make all Nations my Disciples, circumcising them; I appeal* (saith he) *to any impartial Man's Judgment, whether the Apostles would not have proceeded, that it was Christ's Intention that the Infants of adult Proselytes should be circumcised?* And in a Word (saith he) *there lay no Obligation upon our Blessed Lord to lay aside the Practice of Infant Baptism, as being inconsistent either with the first or manly, or universal Nature of the Christian Church.* I answer,

1. The case which the Doctor puts is not at all rational, but upon this Presupposition that the Disciples had known the Law before given to *Israel*, and their practice in that case: but they knew no such Law to have been given to any Nation in the case of Baptism; so that they must only keep to the Words of their Commission, and the Practice of their Master, who made and baptized Disciples, and none else, *John* 4. 1.

2. I must needs tell the Doctor that Christ was obliged to disapprove and make void the Custom of the Jews in baptizing Infants, (if they did so) seeing it was but their own Tradition, and that from the Tenor of his own Doctrine, *Matth.* 15. 9. *Mark* 7. *In vain do ye worship me, teaching for Doctrine the Commandments of Men.* For it was their divers Traditional Washings which he was here opposing. And seeing the Doctor grants their Infant Baptism was but a humane Institution, the Pharisees might have replied to our Saviour, Why dost thou reprove our Washings? Dost not thou also allow the Doctrine of Men in the case of Infant-Baptism? Teacheſt thou another, and teacheſt not thy self? And now the Doctor's Suppositions will tumble down of themselves; for seeing the Apostles knew no such Practice, as baptizing Infants by God's Appointment in the Jewish Church, and they having heard their Master condemn all Washings in Religion founded only on humane Authority, as being but vain Worship; and now receiving no Commandment (as the Doctor must also confess) to baptize Infants, *Matth.* 28. 20. they were sufficiently forbidden to baptize any Infants by Christ's severe Censure against the Jews for worshipping God after their own Tradition.

And therefore though the Doctor thinks he has given some reason why he stated the Question, as you have heard, yet I humbly tell him he was therein very unreasonable, in that he would beg the whole Controversy, *whilst he will suppose, may conclude, that Infant-Baptism had been the immemorial Practice of the Jewish Church, and approved, or at least not censured by our Saviour.* And then indeed if this were true, his Suppositions might beguile a wiser Man than I am: But all this being meer Sophistical, beggarly and presumptuous Insinuations, it is to me a great Evidence against Infant-Baptism.

But now the Doctor (p. 34, 35.) will shew that *Matth.* 28. 19. *Mark* 16. 16. *Heb.* 6. 1, 2. *does not so much as consequentially prohibit Infant-Baptism.* And because we think these places do evidently shew that Christ in the two first could not impose any such thing upon his Apostles, as to teach Infants, and so not to baptize them, because all that he commands them to baptize, he commands them first

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to teach, or preach the Gospel to them. And *Heb.* 6. 1,2. shews very plainly that Baptism does not go before, but follows Repentance and Faith, and therefore cannot with any shew of Truth or Reason from hence belong to Infants, but the contrary. I say, because we thus think and teach from these Scriptures, the Doctor says, we *are grievously mistaken, because these and the like Texts do of themselves no more prove that grown Persons are the only Subjects of Baptism, than the Words of the Apostle,* 2 Thess. 3. 10. *proves that grown Persons only are to eat. From whence in their sophistical way it may be argued thus, It belongs only to grown Persons to eat, because the Apostle requires that Persons who eat should first work.* But I reply;

The Doctor does here greatly wrong both the Apostle and us: 1. The Apostle does not say, *Any that does not work shall not eat*, for he knew that grown Persons who are sick and weak as well as Infants, cannot work. But he says, *If any would not work*, these only are they *who shall not eat*, i. e. such as are able, and yet being idle, would not work. Is this fair for the Doctor to pervert the Words of the Text? 2. He abuses us, for we do not baptize any grown Persons meerly as such. No, all that we baptize are (or at least profess to be) new-born Babes in Christ. Now our Saviour designing Baptism to be the Layer of Regeneration, must needs prohibit those of whose Regeneration no Judgment can be made, nor Demonstration given by any Man whatsoever. Surely the Doctor has little reason to talk of his discovering the fallaciousness of our Arguing. But he says, he will further shew the Weakness and Fallacy of our Argument: Let us hear him do that.

Suppose (saith the Doctor) *there were a great Plague in any Country, and God should miraculously call an eleven or twelve Men, and communicate to them a certain Medicine against this Plague, and say unto them, Go into such a Country, and call the People together, and teach them the Virtues of this Medicine, and assure them, that he that believeth and taketh it from you, shall live; but he that believeth not, shall die. Upon this Supposition I demand of these Dissenters, if the words of such Commission would be sufficient—to conclude that it was God's intention that they should administer his revealed Medicine to none but grown Persons, because they only could be called together, and taught the Virtues of it, and believe or disbelieve them that brought it. No certainly this way of arguing would not be admitted by any rational Man,* &c. I answer;

This Similitude is very fallacious and deceitful, supposing what is not to be supposed in our Case, no, I think not in the Doctor's own

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Judgment. For 1st, no Infant is under the Disease or Plague here meant or intended by the Similitude. For being Christ hath taken off their original Pollution, they are just Persons that need no Repentance, they are to be distinguished from Infidels, Whoremongers, Drunkards, Swearers, Idolaters, superstitious and erroneous Worshippers. The Plague of Unbelief cannot seize them, therefore the Medicine of Faith is not applied to them. The Disease of transgressing the Laws is not upon them, *Rom.* 4. 15. therefore they have not the Medicine of Repentance appointed to them, and consequently not the Baptism of Repentance.

Secondly, This Similitude supposes Infants cannot be cured of the Disease they are under without Baptism, which is so contrary to Truth and to Protestant Doctrine, that it is to be exploded. And thus we see this Flourish, about which he spends two or three Pages, to the amusing his credulous Admirers, comes to nothing at all. For no sooner is it looked into, but it vanisheth as a Dream when one awaketh. Even so, Lord, shalt thou despise this false Image of the Gospel, and all that are like unto it.

And like unto this is the next following, *p.* 36. For tho it be true that considering the previous Law of Circumcision, *Gen.* 17. it is not to be doubted but that *David* or *Solomon* would both observe it in any Commission which they might give to propagate it. But what is all this to the purpose? Where is the previous Law that commanded Infants to be baptized? And such a Law as must be supposed according to the Similitude, to oblige our *David* and *Solomon*, even Christ himself to observe it? Where (I say) is this Law to be found? Not in the Word of God, the Doctor confesses that: Where then? why in the *Talmud*, the *Gemara*, *&c.* Very well. But then this wretched *Talmud* was not finished in our Saviour's days, but 500 years after, and so could be no Rule to him: nor in the time of his Apostles, and so could be no Rule to them, and therefore I hope it shall never be a Rule to us.

The Doctor, *p.* 38. says, we put the greatest stress upon *Mark* 16. 16. *But it is plain* (saith he) *that the believing and not believing in that Text, is only to be understood of such as are capable of hearing and believing the Gospel.* Now as this is very true, and therefore Infants may and shall be saved without believing; so it is as true also, that Infants are not concern'd in the Duty of Baptism here mentioned, but may and shall be saved without that also.

And as the Doctor tells us, he has proceeded thus far to shew how inconclusively and absurdly we argue, *&c.* so I have proceeded thus far

for too, to shew how little Truth or Reason he has used to convict our Arguments of Weakness. But he adds, *So weak are all the Arguments of the Anabaptists, by which they endeavour from Scripture to prove that Christ hath limited the Subjects of Baptism to grown Persons*, &c. Even so I reply, that our weak Arguments are too strong to be overthrown by such impertinent Similitudes as the Doctor has brought against them. And for Scripture, as he has none, so he has brought none, but 2 *Thess.* 3. 10. which he has also very much perverted, as he doth also the Arguments used by us.

Here the Doctor (p. 39, 40.) is pleased to say, *That Infant Baptism is so universal and ancient a Practice, that no body knows when and where it began; or how not being, it came to be the Practice of the Church, since there was never any Church Ancient or Modern, which did not practise it, it must argue a strange Partiality to think that it could be any less than an Apostolical Practice and Tradition.* And he brings *Tertullian* saying, *Had the Churches erred, they would have varied, but what is one and the same amongst them all, proceeds not from Error, but Tradition.*

Here the Doctor has left his Jewish Fort, and takes Sanctuary in Apostolical Tradition; and indeed, the wisest Man that asserts this Scriptureless Practice, is at a loss where to fix it. Nay, the Doctor now tells us plainly, *That no Body knows when, and how, and where Infant-Baptism came in.* And we tell him as plainly, that this is a sign that it is an Error, and *came in privily*, stealing by degrees upon the Churches, as false Teachers are said to do, *Gal.* 2. 4. But now if the Doctor will stand to *Tertullian*'s Rule, we shall soon prove that Infant-Baptism is an Error. For,

1. All Churches have not held or practised it; no, not so much as one Church mentioned in the Holy Scripture, or during the Apostles Days. The Mother Church at *Jerusalem* knew no such practice, for *non apparentibus*, &c. that which appears not, is not. It's easy for the Doctor to say, all Churches held it, but it's impossible for him to prove it. He confesses, no Body knows when it came in, nor how, nor where; and why then might there not be true Churches before it came in, even in his own Judgment, and then all Churches have not held it.

2. But now this is our Argument from *Tertul.* *If the Churches varied about Infant Baptism, then they erred in it: But they varied about it, ergo they erred in it.* The *Major* the Doctor must not deny, because it's become his own; The *Minor* I shall prove presently; first, in *Tertullian* himself, for he was not always the same, even as he is quoted by the Doctor, p. 41. for first he brings him in saying, *Pro cu-*

juſq; perſonæ conditione, ac diſpoſitione, etiam ætate cunctatio Baptiſmi utilior eſt, præſertim tamen circa parvulos, &c. It ſeems then, that tho he ſpeaks favourably of it afterwards, yet he thought *the delay of Baptiſm*, ESPECIALLY FOR LITTLE CHILDREN, *to be more profitable*. And this alſo was the Opinion of *Nazianzen*: Theſe two great Men, who are (at leaſt the firſt of them) as early Witneſſes of Infant-Baptiſm creeping into the Church, as can juſtly be named, ſhewing ſo much doubtfulneſs about baptizing Infants, is a great ſign it had no Authority from Chriſt and his Apoſtles; for what were thoſe Men to teach to delay it, if Chriſt had commanded it? And yet ſo they did expreſly teach, as the words quoted out of *Tertullian* by the Doctor do farther ſhew, becauſe it was his preſent Opinion, That, *cunctatio Baptiſmi præſertim circa parvulos* was *utilior*. He anſwers, *Ne veniant dum adoleſcunt, veniant dum diſcunt, dum quo veniant doceantur*. Yes, he further ſaith, *Fiant Chriſtiani quum Chriſtum noſſe poterint*, but this the Doctor left out. And if after this he altered his Judgment, as the Doctor ſuppoſes, (though ſome Learned Men think otherwiſe) it ſhews, that he was contrary to himſelf in this thing.

Now that whole Churches varied about it, whether we reſpect the Infant Subject, or the alteration of Dipping to Sprinkling, has been abundantly made evident by many; ſo that I ſhall content my ſelf with an Inſtance or two out of the Learned *Du-Veil*, who from *Gratian* on *Mat.* 19. 13. gives this account: *That according to the Rule of Scripture, and agreeing with Reaſon it ſelf, the moſt part of the Greeks in all Ages, even unto this Day, retain a Cuſtom of delaying Infants Baptiſm, till they themſelves can give a Confeſſion of their Faith.* He alſo brings *Nazianzen*, in his 40th Oration, treating of thoſe to whom Baptiſm was not adminiſtred BY REASON OF INFANCY. And it is certain, that *Nazianzen* himſelf, though the Son of a Chriſtian Biſhop, about the 4th Century, and bred up in the Chriſtian Religion, was not baptized till he was about thirty Years of Age. The ſame is alſo true of *Chryſoſtom*, *Hieron*, *Ambroſe*, *Auſtin*, and others. And hence (ſaith he) it does manifeſtly appear, That *the wiſeſt of our Fathers in Chriſt did not come to Baptiſm, until they were come to a ſtrong and confirmed Age and Wit.* Note here, the wiſeſt of our Fathers were not baptized in Infancy; you may be ſure then, that the Churches did vary about it. I could never read of ſo much as one of the Ancient Fathers, for ſix hundred Years after Chriſt, that was baptized in his Infancy.

The Learned *Curcelaus*, as quoted by *Du-Veil*, affirms, "That the "Cuſtom of baptizing Infants, was brought in without the Com-

mandment

mandment of Christ, and did not begin before the Third Age. And the Custom of it being brought in, was much more frequent in *Africa* than in *Asia*, and with far greater opinion of Necessity. This must needs satisfy, that the Churches did vary about Infant-Baptism at its first creeping into the Church. And how Christians have varied one from another because of it, is apparent in all Ages and Nations almost ever since it had a being, has been very largely evidenced, by the care and industry of Mr. *Danvers* and others: And, I think, this present Age may speak for it self, that there are very many Christians, and Churches too, who vary about this Matter. Therefore after the Doctor's Rule from *Tertullian*, they have, and do err in this Matter on the one hand, or on the other.

As the Alteration of the Subject, so the Alteration of the manner of the Administration, has caused great discord among Christians. How Offensive it was to use Sprinkling (which it should seem some were labouring to introduce) in the Year 816, may be gathered from the Synod of *Celicyth*, who gave strict Order to Dip, and not to Sprinkle; *Let the Presbyters beware, that when they Administer the Sacrament of Baptism, they do not pour Water upon the Heads of the Children, but let them be always plunged in the Font, according to the Example of the Son of God.* But directly contrary hereunto, our English Synod, in their Rubrick, do order the Presbyters to Sprinkle, in case the Child be weak; and ever since they were all weak that were brought to be Baptized, for they do nothing but Sprinkle. And so pernicious is this Alteration, that the Muscovites, and others, do now deny the Latins, and other Western Countries, to be rightly Baptized, because they have changed the manner from Dipping to Sprinkling.

I might enlarge my Testimonies of this kind out of the Learned *Du-Veil* and others. And yet the Doctor would perswade the World, the Churches have not varied about this Matter. Nor need the Doctor *wonder that none of the Writers in the first Age of Christianity, are found to decide the baptizing of Infants*, seeing there are none that yet appear in that Age to have held any such Thing. And Dr. *Barlow* has given Testimony, That *there is no just Evidence of Infant-Baptism till about two hundred Years after Christ.* The Dissenters therefore are not unreasonable (as the Doctor would have them) in charging those that have altered, or that approve the Alterations thus made in the Case of Sacred Baptism, with Apostacy, or falling from the simplicity of the Gospel, at least in this, that they have now no true Baptism.

I freely grant, (saith the Doctor) *That no Arguments are equal to the Scriptures, when the Interpretations of them are not doubtful.* And certainly the Texts which concerns the Subject and manner of Baptism, are none of the Scriptures whose Interpretations are doubtful, because it did not comport with the Wisdom of Christ that they should be so. Certainly the Rule which God gave about Circumcision was plain enough; And shall we think our Saviour did leave us to Ambiguities to guide us, in admitting his People to Church-Priviledges? What then can we suppose to be plain? This very thing then that the Pædobaptists are constrain'd to confess, (as Mr. *Baxter* and others) that it's a very difficult thing to prove Infant-Baptism, and that (as the Doctor here) the Scriptures which are brought for it are not plain, for if they were, he confesses no Arguments are like them; but being not clear for Infant-Baptism, tho as clear as the Sun for Believers Baptism, therefore he flies to the *harmonious practice of the Ancient Churches, and the undivided consent of the Apostolical Fathers as authentical Interpreters*, &c. But these are mere flourishes, there has been no such Harmony, nor such undividedness among Churches and Fathers in this Matter, as we have shewed.

He brings many Passages out of Authors Ancient and Modern; but these, especially the most Ancient of them, have been so effectually scan'd by many Learned Pens of those of our Way, as *Tombs, Fisher, Blackwood, Danvers, Den, Du-Veil*, and others, that it's needless to do more. I shall rather endeavour to quiet the Clamour about Fathers, Ancient Churches, *&c.* as if all must be determined by their Sentences, by presenting the Reader with that grave Speech of *Lactantius*, one of these Fathers themselves, by which it will appear, that this Clamour is unreasonable. Thus he speaks, *Lib.* 2. *c.* 8. *Div. Instit. Dedit omnibus Deus pro virili portione Sapientiam*, &c. "God hath given "Wisdom unto all Men, according to a competent measure, that "they may both find out Things unheard of before, and weigh "Things already found out. Neither because they had the start of "us in Time, doth it likewise follow that they have it also in Wis"dom; which if it be indifferently granted to all, it cannot be fore"stalled by them which went before. It is unimparable, like the Light "and Brightness of the Sun, it being the Light of Man's Heart, as "the Sun is of the Eyes. Sythence then to be Wise, that is, to search "the Truth, is a Disposition imbred in every Man, they debar them"selves of Wisdom, who, without any examination, approve the

"Inven-

"Invention of their Ancestors. But this is that which deceives them, "they, like unreasonable Creatures, are wholly led by others; the "Name of Ancestors being once set in the Front, they think it can- "not be, that either themselves should be wiser, because they are "called *Puniers*; or that the other should be in any thing mistaken, "because they are called *Ancestors*.

So that if the Doctor had quoted more of the Ancients than he has done, yet so long as we have the highest Authorities, the Holy Scriptures, and the Reason of Men, as well as the Ancients, we can only follow them, as we see or know they follow Christ. And more than this St. *Paul* does not require of us. *The Ancient Fathers* (saith the Doctor) *undoubtedly had well read and considered the History of Baptism in the Acts of the Apostles, but never drew such absurd Consequences from them*, &c. And did they not as well read the History of Communion in the Acts of the Apostles; and yet drew these absurd Consequences for 600 Years together, that Infants should be communicated. But to this the Doctor tells us,

That God might suffer all the Church to fall into such a harmless Practice as that of Infant-Communion; or that the Fathers of the Church might comply with the Religious Fondness of the People, as we do, saith he, *in bringing them to Prayers*. Now as this may be well guessed, so we likewise may conjecture, and it's not improbable but Infant-Baptism came stealing so too upon the Churches at the first; but after these Errors had got root, they were both defended by the Fathers as if they had been Oracles drop'd from Heaven. And such a Necessity laid upon them, as if Infants could not be saved without them. Thus did *Augustine* teach, both concerning Infant-Baptism, and Infant-Communion.

The Doctor demands, *What account can rationally be given why the Jewish Christians who were offended at the neglect of Circumcision, should not have been much more offended, if the Apostles had refused to initiate Infants under the new Testament?* But we may with more reason demand of the Doctor, seeing the Jews were so offended at the Neglect of Circumcision, why did not the Apostles quiet this discontented People by telling them, you need not be offended, seeing instead of Infant-Circumcision you have now Infant-Baptism? and if indeed there had been any such thing, it had been the most pertinent means to quiet them, to refer them to that for Satisfaction. But seeing the Apostles make no use of this Argument, it's clear they had no such thing to argue from, for where they could use it, they did, as in the

case of baptized Believers themselves, *Coloss.* 2. 11. which is a sufficient Argument that Infant Baptism had no being in the Church in St. *Paul's* time, seeing he never mentions it at all, no not then when he had the greatest occasion for it that could be given.

The Doctor observes, *that the Jews always looked upon the Children of Pagans as common or unclean, but upon their own as separate and Holy.* And then he tells us, that St. *Paul* makes *the same Distinction between them*, 1 Cor. 7. 14. But this is so expresly against the Word of God, that I admire the Doctor should write it, was not this Distinction between Jew and Gentile, the one being common and unclean, the other Holy, taken quite away. *Acts* 10. 15, 18. *What God hath cleansed, call not thou common:* which the Apostle expounds thus, *ver.* 28. *God hath shewed me that I should not call any Man common or unclean.* And why should the Doctor so much as think that St. *Paul* should count the Infants of Jews or Gentiles which do not yet believe, *common and unclean*: The Text 1 *Cor.* 7. 14. says not a Word to that Purpose; but is an Answer to the Scruple which some Christians had about continuing in Marriage-Union with their Yoke-Fellows, who were Unbelievers, supposing them to be unclean; but St. *Paul* perswades them to continue in that Relation, for that they were *both sanctified* to that Relation of Husband and Wife, else saith he, *your Children were unclean.* Now this Text is greatly abused by Paedobaptists, and the learned *Musculus*, who had abused this Text as they do, at last *did confess as much.* Now this place *Acts* 10. 15, 18, 28. does so fully explain St. *Paul*, that no Man can with any shew of Truth or Reason make a Distinction between a Christian's Infant, and the Infant of an Indian, to call the one common and unclean, the other separate and Holy; for if we may call no Man (as such) common and unclean, much less may we call an Infant so. If they be born according to the Law of God, they are called by the Prophet *Malachi* a Seed of God, *chap.* 2. *v.* 15.

And though this Mercy of God towards all Infants equally, might perhaps *gall the Jews*, as it does the Doctor and his party, yet it's Evangelical Doctrine, and shews evidently that God is no Respecter of Persons; and Infants being all equally the same, as Objects of his Pity, he despises none of these little ones: The innocent Babes in *Nineveh* were as dear to him, as the innocent Babes in the Land of *Israel*: and yet for all this it is certain that the Children of faithful Men have many Blessings, which the Children of evil Men have not; being Children of many Prayers, and under early Advantages to know

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the Lord, and to cut short the Days of Iniquity: whilst on the other side the Children of Unbelievers are in danger by an evil Education to be kept from the Truth, and brought up in Error, and as such they (as their Fathers for the same cause) become defiled, not by Birth, but by Sin, *Tit.* 1. 15. For as born according to God's Ordinance, they are his Offspring, *Acts* 17. 28. and so Holy. And to this agrees the Sentence of *Musculus*, *Unless Marriage were Holy and clean, even between Unbelievers; what other thing would follow, than that all the Children are Bastards and unclean? But far be it from us to say so; they are Holy, for they are born of lawful Marriage.*

CHAP. V.

Answereth the Doctor's third Question, Whether it be lawful to separate from a Church which appointeth Infants to be baptized?

THat the Church or People of God ought to be a People separated from them that live in Wickedness, and are professed Adversaries to the Truths of the Gospel in things essential to Church-Communion, will not be denied, I suppose by any Christian.

Now there are two Causes, besides that of the want of true Baptism, which does warrant the present Separation maintained by the present baptized Believers, from the Parochial Church-Communion. The first is that great Impiety and ungodly living, which is everywhere to be seen in such Churches: for the worst of Men to be sure will crowd into those Churches as their Sanctuaries; let the most vigilant Magistrates, and the well-minded Persons in National Churches do what they can, (in their present Constitution) for there will they be, yea and in places of Preferment too.

Secondly, The many Innovations and continual Alterations in Religion, not to be avoided in National Church-Constitutions, by reason of the Influence of Interest, and of the Revolutions which National Government has always upon them, does necessarily enforce, at least some Distinction in Communion, between such Churches, and those whose professed Principles are constantly to adhere to Apostolical Institutions only, in all things essential to the Constitution and Govern-

Government of the Church of God, which must ever be the same, (or should be) however the Government of Nations do alter or suffer Revolutions.

And to this agrees that excellent Sentence of a Divine of the Church of *England*, in his Sermon before the Court of Aldermen, *Aug.* 23. 1674. *We have an Obligation to the Laws of God antecedent to those of any Church whatsoever: nor are we bound to obey those, any further than they are agreeable with these. Separation from a Church is lawful,* 1. *When she requires of us, as a Condition of her Communion, an Acknowledgment and Profession of that for a Truth, which we know to be an Error.* 2. *When she requires of us, as a Condition of her Communion, the joyning with her in some Practices, which we know to be against the Law of God. In these two cases, to withdraw our Obedience to the Church, is so far from being a Sin, that it is a necessary Duty.* Now this being our very case in the point of Baptism, it would justify that Distinction which we hold needful, between the Church of *England*, and those of the baptized Believers; but much more when there are some other things as pressing perhaps as this. But now let us hear the Doctor.

Considering (saith he) *what I have said upon the former Questions: this Question must be answered in the negative, whether we consider Infant-Baptism, as a thing lawful or allowable only, or as a thing highly requisite and necessary to be done.* And as a Foundation on which to build Infant-Baptism as a thing at least lawful and allowable, he directly denies this Principle, *That nothing is to be appointed in Religious matters, but what is warranted by Precept and Example in the Word of God,* accounting this Rule *an Absurdity, and inconsistent with the free and manly Nature of the Christian Religion; and that it is an impracticable Principle,* &c. *p.* 49, 50.

But that this great Principle, well understood, should be spoken against by a Protestant, is something strange; and especially, that he does not suffer it to take place in that which is *essential in a Church-state*, as *who are* and *who are not to be baptized*, is such a case: but he will have Infant-Baptism to be admitted, *as lawful and allowable, tho it be not warranted by Precept nor Example.*

To free this Principle from Abuse, as here suggested against it, we will explain it, as we hold and maintain it. 1. Then we do not say that every thing, which is naturally or meerly accidental and circumstantial in the Worship of God, must have Precept and Example in the Word of God. 2. Nor do we hold that things which are meerly

by indifferent (if not imposed as Boundaries of Communion) are therefore to be esteemed sinful, because not expressly warranted by Precept or Example in the Word. 3. But we apply this Rule always and so in our present Question, to such things as are essential to Church-membership, and Church-Government, as true Baptism is to the first; and cannot be admitted only as a thing indifferent, and as such allowable or lawful only; for it's either necessary in the Constitution of a Church, or it's nothing: and who are of Right, and who are not to be baptized, is of the Essence of Baptism, and can admit of no lower a Consideration.

The Principle thus explained, is clearly justified by the Word of God; and if Protestants part with this Principle, they will lose themselves. Now thus saith the Lord, *Ye shall not add to the Word which I command you, neither shall you diminish ought from it, that you may keep the Commandments of the Lord your God*, Deut. 4. 2. *What thing soever I command you, observe to do it, thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish ought from it*, Deut. 12. 32. *Every Word of God is pure... add thou not unto his Words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a Liar*, Prov. 30. 6. And it is observable that our Lord, as he was sent to be a Minister of the Gospel, claims no Authority to speak of himself, John 12. 5. *Whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak*. How ought this to put an awe upon all that speak in the Name of the Lord about Religion? Neither does the holy Spirit in self, as sent to supply the personal Absence of Christ, take upon himself to give or abrogate Laws, but to bring things to the Apostles Remembrance, *John* 14. 26. *Howbeit when the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all Truth; FOR he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak*: And this is the Rule also by which the Spirit of Truth is known, namely by his advancing the Things delivered by Christ and his Apostles. *He shall glorify me, and shew it unto you, he shall glorify me*, 1 Tim. 6. 3, 4. *If any Man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome Words, even the Words of our Lord Jesus Christ, he is proud, knowing nothing*. 1 John 4. 6. *He that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us: hereby know we the Spirit of Truth, and the Spirit of Error*. Rev. 22. 18. *If any Man shall add to these things, God shall add the Plagues which are written in this Book; and if any shall take away from the Words of the Prophecy of this Book, God shall take away his Part out of the Book of Life*. And that this Text does establish as unalterable the whole New Testament our Adversaries do acknowledge: See *Diodate* on the Place. And *Calvin*.

upon *Deut.* 12. 32. "Sith they (saith he) cannot deny that this "was spoken to the Church, what do they else but report the Sub-"berneſs of the Church, which they boaſt to have been ſo bold as "after ſuch Prohibitions, nevertheleſs to add and mingle of her "Own with the Doctrine of God. And *Luther* doth aver, that no "Doctrine ought to be taught or heard in the Church beſides the pure "Word of God." *Beza* upon *Levit.* 10. 3. ſpeaking in the Perſon of "God, I will puniſh them that ſerve me otherwiſe than I have com-"manded, not ſparing the chief, that the People may fear and praiſe "my Judgments.

Mr. *Burroughs* in his Goſpel-Worſhip, p. 8. "All things in God's "Worſhip muſt have a Warrant out of God's Word, muſt be com-"manded; it is not enough that it is not forbidden, and what hurt "is there in it? *but it muſt be commanded.*

In a Book called, *Abrief Account of the Riſe of the Name* Proteſtant, *p.* 12. printed 1688, we read thus. "Proteſtantiſm doth mainly or rather "only conſiſt in aſſerting the Holy Scriptures to be the Rule, the on-"ly Rule, by which all Chriſtians are to govern and manage them-"ſelves in all matters of Religion; ſo that no Doctrine is to be own-"ed as an Article of Faith, on any account, but what hath very "plain Warrant and ſound Evidence from the Scriptures: Nor no "Inſtance of Religious Worſhip to be owned or ſubmitted to, as ne-"ceſſary, nor any thing to be determined as a part of Religion, but "what the Scriptures do appoint and warrant.

Thus our Adverſaries themſelves do ſay as much for this Principle which the Doctor condemns *as abſurd*, as we do. And indeed where this Principle is neglected, many Innovations are introduced, and many Truths are neglected, under as fair ſhews of Antiquity as can be pretended for Infant-Baptiſm. The Doctor then had little reaſon to call this *a ſlavish Principle*, which is indeed the Principle which delivers us from Slavery, to Jewiſh Fables, Mens Inventions and Traditions.

Pag. 53, 54. the Doctor, to ſupport Infant-Baptiſm, tells us, how he builds *many Points of Faith and Practice, not upon certain Evidences of the Scriptures, otherwiſe than as interpreted ſo or ſo by the Catholick Church*: as 1. *That Chriſt is of one Subſtance with the Father.* 2. *That there are three Perſons in the Trinity.* 3. *That it is neceſſary for Chriſtians to aſſemble on the Lord's Day.* 4. *That the Church be governed by Biſhops.* 5. *That Women have the Lord's Supper.* 6. *That Infants are to be baptized.* And theſe things he makes neceſſary, *no otherwiſe, but in the Ca-*

tholick Church has interpreted divers Scriptures to justify them to be so. Sure this is strange Doctrine for a Protestant.

But were a Man disposed to trace him in all these Particulars, it might appear that the Churches in most Ages have been divided in all, or the most of these Points; that so that he makes the Catholick Church (as it is commonly taken) so great a Foundation of his Faith, as he here pretends to make her, will meet with many Difficulties to discourage and take off his Confidence. And particularly if I desire him to resolve me but this one, What sort of Christians are this Catholick Church? But he adds,

We can prove Infant-Baptism from the Scope and Tenor of the Gospel, and from many Passages of it, as they are interpreted according to the Practice of the ancient Primitive Church. But this is a vain Boast, and I demand what Church, or what Apostle did interpret any part of the Doctrine of Christ, or of the Gospel to such a sense? The Doctor replies, *It is unreasonable to presume that the Gospel would not extend the Subject of Baptism, as far as the Jewish Church extended the Subject both of Circumcision and Baptism.* But I answer, if this be granted, yet the Doctor gains nothing; for, 1. The Jewish Church had no Baptism at all of Divine Institution, and therefore could not extend that she had not. 2. Her Circumcision was limited to *Abraham*'s Family, and perhaps not extended to much above a third part of that Family neither, seeing all Females, and all Males that died before the eighth Day were debarred of it: Whereas the Gospel extends holy Baptism to all Nations, to the End of the World, to both Male and Female, as they are qualified for it. Thus for his Argument from the Scope. Let us now see his particular Passages to prove Infant-Baptism.

P. 55. The Doctor gives us these Texts (as interpreted by the Catholick Church) for Infant-Baptism, *John* 3. 5. *Mark* 10. 14. 1 *Cor.* 1. 16. *Acts* 16. 15, 33. 1 *Cor.* 7. 14. 1 *Cor.* 10. 2. Good Reader look upon these Scriptures, and thou wilt not find one word of Precept or Example for Infant-Baptism in them all. The first Place shews that none can be Church-members lawfully under the Gospel, except they be regenerate, and have the washing of Regeneration by Water; but Infant-Regeneration is a Secret, no Man can know it, God will fit them for Heaven if they die in Infancy: this *David* knew, for his Child which was begot in Adultery, and died without Circumcision, yet he nothing doubted its Salvation. The second Text, our Saviour pronounceth unbaptized (yea I say, unbaptized) Infants to belong to Heaven, how unwise then was the Doctor to bring it for In-

fant-Baptism? If these very Infants which were brought to Christ's own Person, yet were not by him appointed to be baptized, it can never prove that other Infants are to be baptized. And seeing our Saviour declares that unbaptized Infants belong to Heaven, therefore that Place *John* 3. 5. cannot by any means be understood of Infants.

Look well also upon 1 *Cor.* 1. 16. and compare it with 1 *Cor.* 16. 15, 16. and thou wilt find, tho the Catholick Church say nothing, that the Houshold of *Stephanus* were such as had been converted, and were the first Fruits in *Achaia*, and had addicted themselves to the Work of the Ministry, and then these could be no Infants.

As for the two Households, *Acts* 16. it's admirable that wise Men should bring them to prove what they do sufficiently confute. For *Lydia* had no Husband we read of. And there is no Infant found in her House; but the Persons of her Family received Instruction from *Paul* and *Silas*, *Acts* 16. *ult.* therefore no Infants.

And of the *Jaylor's Household*, it is expresly said, that *Paul* spake the Word to all that were in his House; and that he rejoiced, believing in God with all his House. And they went out about Midnight to be baptized. All which being well weighed, no Man, no Church can honestly interpret this Text for Infant-Baptism.

And for that Place 1 *Cor.* 7. 14. the Doctor does injure it, as he did before, in thrusting in the word *common*. And it is ill done to make any distinction of *common* and *unclean*, from *holy*, which God has not made, but rather taken away, as we proved from *Acts* 10. 15. No Man (as such) is now to be called common or unclean, and therefore no Infant is to be called common or unclean, but being born according to God's Ordinance, they are (as such) a *holy Seed*, or a *Seed of God*. See the learned *Diodate* upon the Place, *Mal.* 2. 14. *Marriage ought to be of one with one, and two in the same Flesh. God's chief End in this Proceeding was, that the Posterity might be sanctified, being born in chaste Wedlock, according to his Appointment; wherein it is defiled by all manner of unlawful Conjunction.* And to concude, I wish that my self, and the Doctor, my Oppo[illegible] in this case, be found at last as holy as a dying Infant of a Jew, or poor Indian, and we shall be sure to go to Heaven; for I could never find that it is the Will of our Heavenly Father, that one of these little ones should perish.

We come now to his last Text, 1 *Cor.* 10. 2. where we find, and the Doctor does ingenuously acknowledg, that the Baptism here meant was but an *Umbrage* or *Shadow* of Baptism, not a *real Baptism*. Nor does the Text speak of Infants being baptized in this umbratical Baptism,

tism, it seems as clearly restrained to the Fathers in the case of Baptism, as the eating and drinking Spiritually of Christ is restrained to them, *ver.* 3. So that nothing can be urged from this Text for Infant-Baptism, which will not with equal Truth and Reason conclude for their coming to the Lord's Table. Read Mr. *Diodate* upon this place, he was for Infant-Baptism, yet does not infer Infant-Baptism from this Text, as indeed there is no reason so to do. For it is certain, that all that passed through the Sea, were not baptized to *Moses*, seeing there was a Multitude of Strangers did go with the Israelites; and they are distinguished from the Children of *Israel*, *Exod.* 12. 38. *Numb.* 11. 4. But S. *Paul* appropriates Baptism in the Cloud and in the Sea, to the Fathers [*all our Fathers, &c.*] Now for any to add [*and all their Infants*] is a Presumption not to be justified. It is not said, that *Israel*, or *all Israel* were baptized, which had it been so expressed, would have more favoured the Notion; And yet we know that the words [*Israel*, and all *Israel*] do not include Infants in many places; for example, *Exod.* 14. 31. & 15. 1. *Deut.* 13. 11. *Josh.* 7. 25. much less can they be here called Fathers, and such Fathers too, as did feed upon Christ in Manna, *&c.* as well as were baptized unto *Moses* in the Cloud, *&c.* It must needs be very dangerous to insist upon this Miracle at the Red Sea, as a Rule to us to baptize Infants, the Cause is weak which needs such Arguments to defend it.

The Doctor sets down many other Texts in his Margin, which I have also put down in mine; that the Reader may peruse them, and see if he can find any footing for Infant-Baptism in any of them: the most likely in the Doctor's own Judgment, is *Psal.* 51. 5. and yet we know, that *David's* Infant which was born in Adultery, was saved without Circumcision or Baptism.

Rom. 5. Psal. 51. 5. Rom. 9. 23, 24. 1 Cor. 1. 14. 21, 22. 2 Cor. 5. 14. 19. Job 14. 4.

And the Doctor confesses that the Requisite Necessity of Infant-Baptism cannot be demonstrated from these Texts, without the Tradition of the ancient Church. And there is no such authentick Tradition to be found, (whatever is pretended) for he brings none from the first Churches at all. And that there is no such Tradition, Dr. *Jer. Taylor* is a great witness, who in his Dissuasive from Popery, and in his Rule of Conscience, informs us, *There is no prime or Apostolical Tradition for Infant-Baptism. That it was not practised till about the* 3d *Century, and judged necessary about the* 4th. *That Children of Christian Parents were not baptized till they came to Understanding in the first Ages. That Dipping, and not Sprinkling, was the Usage of Christ and his Apostles;*

and the constant Doctrine and Practice of the Ancients for many hundred Years. See also Mr. *Toombs*, 3d part of *Review*.

But after all this the Doctor is pleased *to allow Salvation to Infants* which die unbaptized; *Because* (saith he) *we ought not to tie God to the same terms to which he hath tied us.* It seems then God hath not tied Infants to any Necessity of Baptism, nor can he prove that he hath tied us to baptize them. But now he will try another way to enforce his Arguments.

"Suppose (saith he) that Scripture and Tradition stood against "Infant-Baptism, in the same Posture as now it stands for it, it would "not be unjustifiable for any sort of Men to separate from the Church "for not baptizing Infants. Let us suppose that Christ had said, I "suffer not little Children to come to me, for the Kingdom of God is "not of such.— and that we had been assured by the Writers of the "two next Ages to the Apostles, that then there was no baptizing In-"fants, I appeal unto them whether it would not be highly unreason-"able to separate from all the Churches in the World for not allow-"ing Infant-Baptism against the concurrence of such a Text to the "contrary, and the Sense and Practice of the Catholick Church?

The meaning of the Doctor I take to be this, that as it is highly unreasonable to separate from a Church, who upon a doubtful or probable ground *only*, does give Baptism to Children: so it would be highly unreasonable to separate from a Church, who upon a like doubtful or probable ground only, should refuse to baptize Infants. I confess this is an odd way of disputing; for here the Churches supposed to err on either side, are yet supposed themselves to be true Churches, and only erring about such a doubtful Practice as this, on the one side, or on the other. But alas the case is far different between the Church of *England* and us. For she is wholly made up of Persons thus doubtfully baptized, nay perhaps not baptized at all, whatever she pretends; and by this doubtful Baptism she is disclaiming all other Baptism in respect of all her Members for some hundreds of Years. Otherwise I must confess, had I lived in the Church in the beginning of the third Century, when Infant-Baptism was creeping in, there was then a Church truly baptized, distinct from the Infants who here and there might perhaps be baptized, upon such supposed Grounds as are mentioned by the Doctor; here (I say) a Separation would in my Judgment have been unwarrantable, it being but an ill Principle to separate from a true Church, tho incumbred with some Error.

But should I have lived till this doubtful Baptism was forced on with *Anathema's*, till it had overtopped and quite *destroyed* in such a

Church all Practice of baptizing Believers in respect of her Members, and that the whole Church were now become doubtful to me, whether she had any Baptism at all. And therewith that she had *apparently left the due form of Baptism, which she had formerly observed.* Then I think no Man could blame me, if I left this Communion, to sit down with those who did yet retain the ancient, and *only undoubted Baptism*, both for Subject and manner of Administration; and this is our very case.

Now seeing it is impossible for us, or any Body else, to hold ample Communion with all sorts of Christians (and there are some good folk amongst them all) why should any one of these Parties, whether Papists, Prelatists, Presbyterians, &c. expect that all should come to them? or why should the Doctor think we ought to joyn Communion with his Party, more than others, unless they could not err as well as the rest? But seeing that is not to be pretended, we must all satisfy our own Souls as well as we can, where to communicate, and where to forbear, for with all we cannot have Communion; let us not then grudge one against another about this necessary Christian Liberty.

Page 80. The Doctor attempts to prove this Tradition, not doubtful, but certain in the case of Infant-Baptism, to which purpose he insists on that Rule given by *Vincentius Lyrinensis*, viz. *Universality, Antiquity*, and *Consent*. But I have shewed already, that all these being truly taken, are all wanting in the case of Infant-Baptism, because (as for other reasons, so for these in particular) 1. The Churches in the Apostles days baptized no Infants. And 2. The Greek Churches to this day do retain the Custom of delaying Baptism (which yet is no delay) to Children, till they make Profession of their Faith: and the Doctor confesses a few of the Fathers were against it. And there might be more for ought he knows, though not counted among such Fathers that might deserve as well as any. And it is known that many very learned and good Men have seen cause in this and former Ages to reject this Tradition, though it has cost them the loss of all that this World could afford them. And the Authorities here brought by the Doctor are not so ancient (some of them) as is pretended even by his own Confession, and they have been scan'd and answered by the learned Pens of *Den, Tombes, Blackwood, Fisher, Danvers, Delaun, Duveil*, and others.

Lastly, The Doctor says, *The Anabaptists themselves cannot defend the baptizing of such grown Persons as were born and bred in the Church from Scripture, without Tradition and Practice of the Church.* As

As if our Saviour's Authority to *teach and baptize all Nations*, or to *preach to every Creature*, and to baptize all that believe to the end of the World, were not a sufficient Rule to us to teach our Children, and to baptize them, *Matth.* 28. 19. *Mark* 16. 16. We see evidently that Jesus Christ has given but one Rule to us and to our Posterity, and therefore it was unadvisedly spoken, to say that *we cannot produce the Precept for teaching and baptizing our Children*, when they are grown up, *being bred and born of Christians*, as I suppose that is his meaning, by being *bred and born in the Church*. Had the Doctor considered that Exhortation of the Apostle to all Christians, *Ephes.* 6. *Teaching Parents to bring up their Children in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord*, and to *Children to obey their Parents in the Lord*: And therewith the Example of the Children of the elect Lady, 2 *Ep. John*, *Who are found walking in the Truth, as the Apostle and the Lady her self had received Commandment from the Father*; it might have passed for a better Precedent in this case, than Mans Tradition without Scripture can possibly be, for Infant-Baptism.

I conclude then, that seeing Christ's Command is as clear for teaching and baptizing our Children, as any other Mens Posterity; and that it is the express Duty of Christian Parents to bring up their Children in the Admonition of the Lord (that is, as *Chrysostom* expounds the place) *to make them Christians*; and this Advice he gave in opposition *to the training up Children in prophane Literature*. And the Precedent of this vertuous Lady, whose Children, whilst under her Care and Tuition, obeyed the Truth, and walked therein according to God's Commandment, and not as Men received Tradition from their Fathers, *but as the Apostle had received Commandment from the Father*; and so he exhorts them to continue, and to beware of other Doctrine, and to have *no Fellowship* with such as should *bring any other Doctrine than that which had been delivered by the Holy Apostle*. This may suffice to answer the Objection.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Answereth the Doctor's fourth Question, *Whether it be a Duty incumbent upon Christian Parents to bring their Children to Baptism?*

I Marvel why the Doctor puts not the term [Infant] into his Question, he knows we are for bringing our Children to Baptism as soon as we can. But how does he prove that Christian Parents are obliged to bring their Infants to Baptism? Why this he doth by repeating what he had said under the 3d Question: 1. *About the Lawfulness or Allowableness.* 2. *About the requisite Necessity of Infant-Baptism.* And therefore I only refer my Reader to what has been answered to these things in the former Chapter.

And now when the Parents may very rationally expect some Command from God to bring their Infants to Baptism; The Doctor tells us, *There is no Necessity of having a Command, or Example to justify it, but it is sufficient that it is not forbidden.*

But he refers them to the Orders of the Church, and quotes *Heb.* 13. 17. *Obey them that have the Rule over You*: But never shews at all, *who gave such Orders to the Church*, that *Parents* and *Proparents* should bring their Infants to Baptism. And therefore all that is here said is meer Talk without any good Warrant.

He quotes *Acts* 16. 4. which shews that the Decrees which were ordained at *Jerusalem* ought to be kept. And we allow it, but here's not a Word for to bring Infants to Baptism in these Decrees; but here is a Decree against the eating of Blood, which is little regarded by the Doctor, or however his Church does not regard it. Yet this Text of the Decrees, he would make serve for Infant-Baptism, and indeed, had the Apostles had Power to make such a Decree, this was as fit a time and occasion for it as could be, the Question being about Infant-Circumcision; and the Apostles disannulling their Circumcision, would certainly have given some Notice that they had or ought to have Baptism instead of it; but seeing they do not in the least mention it, we may be sure *there was no Infant-Baptism in being at that time.*

The

The Doctor will now shew us the *Benefits of Infant-Baptism*, and from thence infer for the *Duty of Parents and Proparents to bring them to Baptism*; and the first *is their Consecration to God*. As if no Infants were consecrated to God but those who are baptized. Methinks our Saviour should know how to consecrate Infants to God as well as the Doctor, but he did it only by Prayer or Blessing, not by baptizing them. There is no doubt but such as follow his Example in devoting Infants to God by Prayer, do act warrantably, but he that will do it by baptizing them, acts without a Guide, and deprives Children of the Baptism of Repentance, when they come to Years, and have need of it.

His *second Benefit is to make Infants Members of the mystical Body of Christ*. As if it were in Mans Power to make whom they please Members of that Body, and that when they are fast asleep too. Is not this the plain Consequence of this Opinion, that all Infants unbaptized, being not of Christ's mystical Body, must perish? I know the Doctor does not hold this; but it's hard to avoid this Rock when Men are entangled in this Error, that they can make Infants Members of Christ's mystical Body by Sprinkling or trolling them with Water, and they think they can be made so by no other way.

Now I demand of any Man, whether the whole Number of the *Saved ones* be not all of Christs mystical Body? not doubting but it will be granted. I desire it may be considered, whether these unbaptized Infants whom Christ blessed, were of his mystical Body? I suppose this will be granted too; and then consider also whether all Infants of whom Christ said, to them belongs the Kingdom of Heaven, are not of his mystical Body, as it contains all saved ones? I believe none will deny this. The last Consideration is, Whether Christ does speak of Infants indefinitely, and as such comprehends them all, and if not, how is it possible for any Man to know one sort of these Infants from another? all dying Infants then are of the mystical Body, as it contains all that shall be saved.

The Doctor's third Benefit, *That the baptized Infant by that Solemnity, may pass from a State of Nature, wherein he was a Child of Wrath, to a State of Adoption of Grace, wherein he becomes a Child of God*, p. 64.

But is the Doctor sure that Infants are now Children of Wrath, that is, liable to Condemnation? Sure whatever their state was in the first *Adam*, yet they are acquitted from Damnation by the Mercy of God in the second *Adam*: for the Lamb which was slain from the the Foundation of the World, has taken away the Sin of the World

from

from innocent Babes, so that they are not the Objects of God's Wrath, but they are Objects of his Grace and Mercy: see *Jonah* 4. 11.

Who would think that so wise a Man should believe that the Adoption of Grace is regulated by Water-Baptism? or that it must needs wait on him when he sprinkles an Infant? for saith he, *By that Solemnity they may pass from a State of Nature*, &c. Now we teach and believe thus, *that the Adoption of Grace goes before Water Baptism.* And so taught the Apostle *Paul*, *Gal.* 3. 26, 27. *We are all the Sons of God by Faith in Christ Jesus.* And then it follows, *As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.* But I think the Doctor comes very near the Papists *opus operatum*, in what he here asserts concerning Infant-Baptism.

His fourth Benefit, *That Infants have Baptism for a Sign and Seal that their Sins are pardoned, and to confer the Right of Inheritance unto everlasting Life: That Baptism washes Infants clean from Original Sin, and seals the Pardon of it, and the Assurance of God's Mercy unto them; and being cleansed by the Washing of Regeneration, from the Guilt of that natural Vitiosity which they derived from* Adam, *and which made them obnoxious to the Displeasure of God, they become reconcil'd to him, and acquire as certain a right to Eternal Life upon their Justification, as any Believer in the World.*

Now had the Doctor proved all this *daintily* out of the Book of God, I should have thought him the *finest* Man that ever wrote about Infant Baptism, but when he puts me off with *Origen*, *Irenæus*, &c. I am displeased, and must only take him for a very Bold Man, but no certain Oracle. However he is pleased to add, (which was very needful for him in this place) *That he cannot deny but Infants may be saved without Baptism, by the extraordinary and uncovenanted Mercies of God.* Well, here is some comfort for unbaptized Infants: But who can think that the Covenant of Grace should not reach poor Infants in the case of Salvation, without Baptism? but if any of them that are not baptized be saved, it must be by *extraordinary and uncovenanted Mercy.* These are new and strange Doctrines, and so let them be. The Covenant of Grace was made with whole *Adam*, *Gen.* 3. 15. And therefore as Infants, " without their own consent, or any act of " their own, and without any exterior Solemnity, contracted the Guilt " of *Adam*'s Sin, and so are liable to all the Punishment which can with " Justice descend upon his Posterity, who are personally innocent; " so Infants shall be restored without any Solemnity or Act of their " own, or any other Men for them, by the SECOND ADAM, by the

" Redemption of Jesus Christ, by his Righteousness and Merits, ap-
" plied either immediately, or how or when he pleaseth to ap-
" point. Dr. *Taylor*.

His fifth Benefit, *That Infants are by Baptism admitted into Covenant, and ingrafted into Christ's Body, to acquire a present Right to all Promises of the Gospel, and particularly unto the Promises of the Spirit, which is so ready to assist initiated Persons. This the Primitive Christians* (he durst not say Infants) *found true by Experience*, &c. He quotes no Scripture for all this, but *Heb.* 6. 4. which how well it agrees to Infants, let the Reader consider. I am perswaded the Doctor was so sensible of the Unapplicableness of these things to Infants, that he durst not name them, but Persons all along: but seeing he must mean Infants, the very recital of his Sayings, is the Confutation of them. For can he give so much as one Instance of an Infant that received the Holy Spirit upon its being baptized? And why then does he presume to speak what neither he nor any Man else can ever prove to be true? Nay he tells us in this very page, (for he is too wise a Man I hope to face out a Fable) *he confesses that the Holy Ghost cannot be actually conferred upon Infants in Baptism, by reason of their natural Incapacity*. And yet being loth to let the Cudgles fall, it's notorious how faintly he goes on in this and the next Page, (66, 67.) at last concludes in a kind of an Angry *Huff*, saying, *No Person of common Ingenuity, who hath any sense of Honour, or any tollerable Degree of Conscience within him, can without Shame and Horror break these sacred Bands asunder, by which he was bound to God in Infancy*.

But good Sir consider, we do not spurn against the good Intentions of our Parents in designing us to the Service of God, tho we justly disallow the irregular Methods which they fell into in so doing. Your Predecessors had their Consecration in Infancy by *Spittle, Salt, Candles, Exsufflations*, &c. You do not think that they were bound to ratify these Follies when they came to Years: And truly so neither can we ratify your Sprinklings, Crossings, Gossips, &c. in your Consecrations, though so far as you mean well, we may not despise but commend; and also do now that part of God's Will which our Parents mistake would have prevented. A due Regard to *Uzzah's case*, and *David's Reformation thereupon*, obliges us to this. But now we are to hear from the Doctor what Profit Infant-Baptism brings to the Church of God.

The first, he says, *it prevents those Scandalous and shameful Delays of Baptism, which otherwise grown Persons would be apt to make*, &c.

To

To this I must needs say, If any thing without the Word of God, would induce me to baptize Children, this Consideration of the Doctor would as soon prevail as any thing; for God knows this Duty is shamefully neglected by many whose Duty it is to hasten to it. *But we must not do Evil that Good may come*; We may not do what God does not command, because Men will not do what he does command. And tho it be true that Men will need as many Exhortations to be baptized (and perhaps more) than to come to the Lord's Supper, yet all this must not discourage us, nor force us to innovate Methods of our own, and leave what God has prescribed. If the faithful Minister labour in vain some times, yet his Work is with the Lord, *Isai.* 49. 4. But I cannot, as the Doctor does, applaud the Wisdom of those who to prevent Mens Delay of Baptism, ran into another Extream, by which the Church, however she may be more numerous, yet by this means the Grace of Baptism is destroyed, or made unnecessary to Baptism, because as the learned *Bossuit* confesses, *it is separated from Baptism in little Infants.*

Were good Schools for catechising the Youth provided, and a painful Ministery to keep such Schools, this might be a better way to prevent the Delays of Baptism than to baptize Infants; for in truth, that proving *no Baptism at all*, proves *the greatest Delay of all.* Now for the use of such Schools, both the Scripture and Antiquity would stand by us.

For when all is said that can be said, Baptism being the washing of Regeneration, a mystical and spiritual Burial with Christ, the Church ought to have pious care, that none be admitted to Baptism, but such as give some competent account of the Work of Faith with Power in their Souls. And hereunto agrees the Scriptures with full consent; *What hinders that I may not be baptized*, saith the Eunuch? *If thou believest with all thy Heart, thou mayest*, saith *Philip. They that gladly received the Word were baptized. Lydia's* Heart being opened *to attend to the Word, she was baptized.* When the *Samaritans believed, they were baptized*, & so were the *Corinthians. The Galatians were Sons of God by Faith, and so baptized. The Romans were dead to Sin, and so baptized*; and so were the *Colossians*: and so did our Saviour order it, that he *that believeth, should be baptized*: we find none else by him appointed to it. In vain do Men strive against such clear Evidence of the Divine Will and Authority of Heaven, and rest upon, and soar very high upon the Wing of humane Authorities: *What is the Chaff to the Wheat, saith the Lord?*

Acts 8. 46.
Acts 16. 14.
Acts 2. 38.
Acts 8. 12.
Acts 2. 41.
Acts 18. 8.
Mark 16. 16.

Wherefore the Doctor's Flourish *about his high Presumption, that the Apostles authorized the Practice of Infant-Baptism, and that it is most agreeable to Christ's Intention*, p. 70, 71. are but Mans Breath: Christ's Intention is not known in this matter, but by his Word, or the Testimony of his Witnesses, from whence no such meaning can with Fairness be gathered. And for his Talk here again of *Christ's not repealing the Jewish Custom of baptizing* is but vain: nor does Dr. *Lightfoot's Testimony* and *his own*, that there was such a Baptism, signify so much, but that the Test of the learned Sir *Norton Knatchbul*, and that learned Jew Dr. *Duveil*, may serve to ballance them.

CHAP. VII.

Answereth the Doctor's fifth and last Question; *Whether it be lawful to Communicate with Believers, who were only baptized in their Infancy?* P. 72.

IN stating this Question, the Doctor does little more than repeat what he said upon the second and third Questions, and grants, that the stating of this depends upon what he said to them. And therefore what is said in Answer to these Questions, is refer'd to in this place.

He tells us, *p.* 73. *It never entred into the Heart of any of the Ancient Christians, to refuse Communion with grown Persons who had been baptized in their Infancy.* But the Question is not so much what they did, as what ought to be done in this Case: Yet I must needs say, their Case and ours differ exceedingly, as I shewed in answer to the last Question before this. They lived when an Error was but creeping in here and there; and it was not pressed as necessary, till about the fourth Century; and so it may be there was no great Division about it, tho it's more than the Doctor can be confident of. But we live in an Age, when Infants are not baptized, but rantized only; and the Churches allowing such a practice, do not now, as then they did, consist mostly of Baptized Believers; but the Church the Doctor would have us communicate with, have not only no other Baptism but the sprinkling of Babes, but have been very fierce against all that have opposed it, and asserted the Ancient Truth, even to the undoing of them, nay, to the destroying them from off the Earth; so that

the Separation has been evidently occasioned, by the unreasonable and cruel proceedings of the Assertors of Infant-Baptism.

It is famous in the Writings of Learned Men, that the *Donatists* and *Novatians* denied Infant-Baptism, (tho some of them might permit it in danger of Death): And it's certain these Christians were very considerable, both for Number and Piety, and were more disliked by the other Party, for their strictness about their Communion ordinarily, than for any thing of Heresy they charg'd them with. But the *Apostolici* were more Ancient, and they are expressly called *Anabaptists* by the *Papists*, because they looked upon Infant-Baptism as ridiculous.

But now if the Doctor will have the Question truly stated, as the Case is, in our Judgment and Conscience, then it must be put into these Terms: *Whether it be lawful for Baptized Believers to hold Communion with such Christians as they think are not baptized at all?* And then the Doctor is a Person of that discretion, that he himself must acknowledg that it must be resolved in the *Negative*, till he or some Body else do convince us, that the Church of *England* has some Baptism, either true essentially, or false in part and form only, which would alter the Case. But we do believe she has none at all: So that Communion with her is more difficult. We cannot conceive how *Infant Baptism should be necessary by the presumptive Will of Christ*, as the Doctor phraseth it. Such Language is very uncouth to us, and seems to open a Gap for Men to presume the Will of Christ to be whatsoever they please, or what by Learning and Parts they can make a plausible Discourse for.

It is a weighty Consideration, if it were true, That our Opinion *does infer that there has been no true Church on Earth for* 1100 *Years, nor a Church for* 1500, *with whom a Christian could Communicate without Sin.* But this cannot be true; for tho Infant-Baptism was an Error (in our Judgment) ever since it had a being, yet there was always some Churches free of it, and those we have taken notice of before to be many of the Greek Churches, as Learned Authors do confess, even such as were themselves for Infant-Baptism; and with them are to be reckoned (in this Question) the *Apostolici*, *Donatists*, *Novatians*, and a great part of the *Waldenses*, as is fully made manifest by Mr. *Danvers* and others, of which I shall here give a brief Account.

1. But first we must premise, That all the Churches mentioned in Scripture are ours, being baptized upon profession of Repentance: and I

and Faith. No Man being able to this day to shew so much as one Infant was Baptized in any one of the Churches mentioned in the Scriptures.

2. In the next Age to the Apostles, *Justin Martyr* gives this Account of the practice of the Churches; "I will declare (saith he) "how we offer up our selves to God——Those amongst us that are "instructed in the Faith——being willing to live according to the "same——are brought by us into the Water, and there, as we were "new born, are they also by new Birth renewed——and then in cal-"ling upon God the Father, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy "Spirit, they are washed in Water.

3. In the third Age, Mr. *Baxter* tells us out of *Tertullian*, *Origen*, and *Cyprian*; "That in the Primitive Times none were baptized "without an express Covenanting, wherein they renounced the "World, &c. and engaged themselves to Christ.

4. In the fourth Age, *Basil* saith, "That none were to be bapti-"zed but *Catechumens*, and those that were duly instructed in the "Faith.

5. In the fifth Age, *Chrysostom* saith, "The time of Grace or Con-"version was the only fit time for Baptism, which was the Season in "which the three thousand in *Acts* 2. and others afterward were bap-"tized.

6. The African Churches (commonly called *Donatists*) taught, "That none should be baptized, but those that believed and desired "the same.

7. The Waldensian Churches tell us; "That by Baptism Belie-"vers were received into the Holy Congregation, there declaring "their Faith, and amendment of Life.

8. The Churches in *Germany* own'd the same Faith and Practice.

9. The Churches in *Helvetia* asserted the same, and suffered for their Testimony.

10. The *Bohemian* Churches, by great Sufferings, bore witness to the same Truth.

11. The Churches in *Thessalonica* did the same.

12. The Churches in *Flanders* suffered for the same cause.

13. The *Hungarians* did the same.

14. And so did the Churches in *Thessalonica*.

15. The Churches of the Ancient *Britains* did the same, and died for their Testimony.

Here

Here some will be ready to say, We value not Mr. *Danvers*, he was mistaken in his Quotations. But let me reply; Would Men but impartially read his Defence, they would see cause to justify him from most of the Clamours which have been vented against him.

Neither do we censure good and pious Men in the darker Times above us, who perhapps had not opportunity, as we have, to see and avoid the Error; God Almighty indulging the oversights of his sincere Ones in all Ages, as we trust he will do ours in this; for some may yet come after us to restore some Truth which we have not minded, being so much busied, both by Writing, Preaching, and Suffering, in defence of some particular Truths which are the Controversy of our Age. And this was the Case of our worthy Predecessors, who were called to contest with the Spirit of Error. And we doubt not but all sincere Christians, who have not wilfully opposed themselves to any Truth, shall find Mercy in the Day of Christ, and receive a Reward according to the Infinite Goodness of God, who will not suffer any to go without a Reward, who have been but so kind to any, because they belonged to Christ, as to give them a Cup of cold Water to drink.

And in the mean time, I am for so much Communion with all Christians, as will do them and my self good. But seeing it is impossible for any to maintain full or ample Communion with all sorts, professing the Christian Name at this Day; There is a necessity either for some powerful Party to kill all the rest, that he may be the only Church, or else Brotherly to agree to permit all to chuse their Communion, where they can most comfortably enjoy it; and I heartily desire that none for any cause but true inward Peace, would make use of this Liberty. But about this we have more fully treated in the fifth Chapter, that here we shall add no more at present, but shall conclude with our humble Request to the Church of *England*, to consider how great a Pressure it must be upon our Conscience, to break up our Assemblies, which we believe to be truly constituted Churches, and to unite with Hers, which we believe to be so defective in her Constitution, as to have no Baptism at all.

Now that the Baptism of Repentant Believers is of Heavenly Original, is granted on all hands, that it stands clear both in Scripture, and unquestionable Antiquity next to the Scripture, is altogether undeniable; and that this Baptism is to be continued to the end of the World, cannot be spoken against.

And on the other side, Does not even Mr. *Baxter*, and other Learned

ned Assertors of Infant-Baptism, confess, *'tis a very difficult Point to prove by Scripture?* And do not the Learned *Papists*, *and some Learned Protestants, acknowledg there is no Scripture for Infant-Baptism? Neither Precept nor Practice in Scripture for Infant-Baptism?* That it was brought in *without the Commandment of Christ? That it is only a Church Rite*, and not of Divine Institution? These Things cannot be hid from you, and therefore there is a necessity that some speedy and prudent way be taken by the Church of *England* to restore this Holy Ordinance to its purity, in respect of the Subject to be baptized.

For though the Church of *England* does retain the Doctrine of Baptism, with respect to its precedency to other Ordinances, its Utility and Dignity in the Church of God; yet this is to little purpose still, so long as another thing is substituted in the room of it, both in respect of the Subject and manner of Administration.

Concerning the latter, let the Church of *England* be intreated to consider the Reflections which have been made upon this Alteration of Immersion to Sprinkling, by the learned *Bossuet* in his *Book of Communion*, &c. And the Conviction which some learned Protestants in *France* have lately met with upon that occasion. I will set down the words of the learned Author who calls himself *Anonymus*, as they are translated by Dr. *Duveil* upon the Acts of the Apostles, *p.* 292, 293.

"It is most certain that Baptism hath not been administred hitherto, otherwise than by Sprinkling, by the most part of Protestants, but truly this Sprinkling is an Abuse. This Custom which without an accurate Examination, they have retained from the Romish Church, in like manner as many other things, makes their Baptism very defective, it corrupteth its Institution and ancient use, and that nearness of Similitude, which is needful should be betwixt it and Faith, Repentance, and Regeneration.

"This Reflection of Mr. *Bossuet* deserveth to be seriously considered, to wit, that this use of plunging hath continued for the space of a whole thousand and three hundred Years; that hence we may understand, that we did not carefully, as was meet, examine things which we retained from the Roman Church; and therefore since the most learned Bishops of that Church do teach us now that the Custom established by most grave Arguments, and so many Ages, was abolished by her, this self-same thing was very unjustly done by her, and that the Consideration of our Duty doth require at our hands, that we seek again the primitive Custom of the Church, and the Institution of Christ.——Though therefore

"we

"we should yield to Mr. *Bossuet* that we are convinced by the force "of his Arguments, that the Nature and Substance of Baptism con-"sisteth in Dipping, what may he hope for from us, but that the "Professors see themselves obliged to him by no small Favour, and "thank him that he hath delivered us from Error, when we greatly "erred in this thing?

"And as we are resolved indeed to correct and rectify this Error; "so we desire earnestly with humble Prayer of him, that he would "correct and amend that Error of taking away the Cup from the *Laicks* coming unto the holy Supper. Does Monsieur *Bossuet* think that "the Protestants will have a greater respect of that Custom which "they have found to be unlawful, and that by the most weighty and "solid Arguments, than of the Institution of Jesus Christ, and that "to let *Rome* get an opportunity of boldly and freely breaking the "Laws of Christ, by the pernicious Imitation of our Example.

"Far be that wicked frame of Mind from them: they are straiter "bound by the Authority of their holy Master, than to despise his "Voice when his Sound cometh to their Ears, *My Sheep hear my Voice*; "and again, *I know my Sheep*. None, except Wolves lurking under a "Sheep-skin, refuseth and turneth from it. ——There is no Place "therefore for cogging in these things, for those that pretend the spe-"cious Title *of received Customs* for the Days Practice, when Jesus and "his Gospel is not the Custom, but the Truth. *From the beginning it* "*was not so*, says the same Jesus unto them, who did object unto him "the worst and cursed Custom of their Ancestors.

"When we shall be presented before the Judgment of Christ, he "will not judg his Disciples by Custom, but by the lively and effectu-"al Word of his Gospel. Neither should any be taken with a vain "hope of framing an Excuse from the Authority of the Church, be-"cause all the Authority of the Church is from Christ granted unto her "for that intent and purpose, that she might procure a Religious "Obedience to his Laws, and Heavenly Precepts, but not that she "might break, repeal and cancel them.——There is in the Church "no more Power of changing the Rites in the Sacraments, than there "is Power of changing his Word and Law, *&c.* Thus far the Learned and pious Protestant.

And shall the religious French Protestants be thus awakened and resolved to correct and rectify this Error, by the Reflections made upon it by an Enemy; and shall the English Protestants add yet more Slumber, notwithstanding they have not only the very same *Alarm* come

amongſt them from the ſame Pen; but their own Learned Men who ſtand upon their Watch-towers, have given them notice of this *Baptiſm-deſtroying Error*. And beſides this, God has raiſed up Witneſſes for his Truth in this as well as other Particulars, who with great Learning and Judgment have ſhown the Beauty of this Inſtitution both by Doctrine, and by the Practice of it in the Royal City, and in moſt Parts of this Land, for many Years together; and yet the Church of *England* does not ſtir up her ſelf at all, to take hold of plain Truth in this matter.

And tho I am one of the leaſt of the Witneſſes which God has raiſed up in this Age and Nation in behalf of this Truth, yet I ſhall humbly crave leave to addreſs the Church of *England* after this friendly and free manner, *as I did Mr.* Boſſuet *himſelf*.

1. I beſeech her to conſider that ſhe has now to do with ſuch Chriſtians as are in good earneſt for the ancient Chriſtian Religion, as it was delivered by Chriſt and his Apoſtles; ſuch as would not have any Truth, delivered by Heavens Authority, to be neglected, nor in any wiſe to be corrupted by Innovation, Change or Alteration, but religiouſly obſerved and kept, according to the due Form and Power of Godlineſs.

2. As to *the Caſe of Infant-Baptiſm*, be pleaſed to conſider, that the Salvation of our Infants are as dear to us as yours can be to you, and therefore you have no reaſon to think that we would willingly omit any thing which God has appointed as a furtherance thereunto; and being, as all Men know, no leſs zealous for the Ordinance of Baptiſm than your ſelves, you may be confident we would by no means hinder its due extent, but promote it therein by all lawful means we are able.

3. That our Lord Jeſus has made Baptiſm neceſſary to the Salvation of Infants, is not revealed in the holy Scripture; nor that he has made it neceſſary for them at all; and therefore, as the *African Council* did ill to *Anathematize* thoſe that denied the firſt, ſo you have not done well to *Anathematize* ſuch as cannot in Conſcience bring their Infants to Baptiſm.

4. Let therefore our Brethren of the Church of *England* return to the Truth in the Caſe of holy Baptiſm, that we may return to her; for when it ſhall be ſo with her, ſhe will diſtinguiſh between the Precious and the Vile; yea that very Miniſtration rightly reſtored, will naturally lead to a far greater Purity in Church-Communion, than has hitherto been attained. But if ſhe will not be intreated to amend her Ways and her Doings, the Lord will plead the Cauſe of his neglected Truth and deſpiſed People.

The

The CONCLUSION.

THE Doctor was pleased to reserve some of our Objections against the Pædobaptists for the Conclusion of his Book. Now the Reader does understand, that tho we shew like Arguments for Infant-Communion, as they bring for Infant-Baptism, both from Scripture and Antiquity, yet we do not therefore hold that they are to be brought to the holy Table of the Lord; but we do hereby shew that the Pædobaptist is not consistent with himself, as for example:

This Doctor argues for Infant-Baptism from 1 *Cor.* 10. 2. that because *Infants passed through the Sea*, and it's said, *All our Fathers were baptized unto Moses in the Cloud and in the Sea*, therefore Infants were baptized to *Moses*, and consequently ought to be baptized to Christ. Now to shew the Fallacy of this Argument, we say, *All* that are said to be baptized, *ver.* 2. are also said *to eat and drink spiritually of Christ*; so that this Scripture is as strong for Infant-Communion, as for Infant-Baptism; tho in Truth it's no Rule for either. For how should it follow, that because God saved *Israel* miraculously from the Rage of *Pharaoh*, in the Cloud, and in the Red Sea, and fed them miraculously with Mannah and Water in the Wilderness; Therefore we are to baptize and communicate Infants. But we have shewed before that the Apostle does limit this Baptism, and feeding upon Christ, to those of Understanding, [to wit, our Fathers] and so doth *Augustine*, speaking of the latter in these words, *Quicunque in Manna Christum intellexerunt, eundem quem nos cibum spiritualem manducaverunt.*

We shew also from this 1 *Cor.* 10. 17. that all that are baptized into one Body, are to partake of one Bread at the Lord's Table: and therefore it will follow that if Infants ought to be baptized into the Church Militant, they ought not to be denied the Bread and Cup in the Communion of that Body.

When they plead from Antiquity, *&c.* we shew them (and they know it) that *near the second or early Ages of the Gospel, Infants were brought to the Lord's Table to communicate there*, and that this *Custom continued 600 Years*, yet it was laid aside as unwarrantable, and we shew there is equal reason to lay aside the Custom of baptizing Infants. But we have more particularly shewed these things in our *Animadversions*

sions upon Dr. S. his Digressions about Infant-Baptism: Wherein also the Substance of this Book of the *Case of Infant-Baptism*, is redargued; and indeed this Book seems to have been added as an Enlargement upon those short Notes of Dr. *Stillingfleet*, though done perhaps by another Hand.

I shall therefore say no more at present to the Doctor's Conclusion, nor shall I take notice of Mr. *Philpot*'s Dream; he was doubtless a good Man, yet that he did dream waking, as well as when asleep, is evident enough to all that will consider how extreme weakly he goes about to prove Infants to be Believers, &c. But let us not trouble the Dead, we shall ere long be with them, where all our Mistakes will be made manifest, and all our unavoidable Infirmities will be pardoned. But if any Man sin presumptuously, the same reproacheth the Lord: And happy is the Man who sincerely seeks for Truth, and faithfully walks up to his Light, tho through unavoidable Weakness he may err in many things. For our God knoweth our Frame, and whereof we are made, and remembers that we are but Dust, and like as a Father pities his [willing tho weak] Son, even so the Lord pittieth them that fear him. To him therefore be Glory for ever. *Amen.*

An Appendix *concerning the Sign of the Cross in Baptism.*

BEcause there is bound up with the *Case of Infant-Baptism*, a Treatise called, *The Case of the Sign of the Cross in Baptism*, We shall take so much notice of it as to ask, (in *Tertullian*'s words, *Unde venisti?*) Whence comest thou? And to this the Author seems to give answer, *Ab Antiquitate*, from *Antiquity*, *Tradition*, &c. And quotes for it *Tertullian*, *Origen*, *Basil* and *Cyprian*, and gives as good ground from Antiquity and Tradition for it, as our Doctor has done for Infant-Baptism. And he has a clearer Text for it too (if *Jerome* say true) than any which has been yet alledged for Infant-Baptism, *viz.* Ezek. 9. 4. *Set a Mark upon the Foreheads of the Men that sigh.* He tells us that by several *of the Hebrew Versions, this mark is supposed to be by the Hebrew* ת *Tau*, which *Jerome* says, *was in the Samaritan Character like our* T, and *so made the Figure of the Cross.*

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It seems these two Cases, *Infant-Baptism*, and *the Sign of the Cross in Baptism*, stands much upon the same bottom, and will stand and fall together. Howbeit we shall not do much more about this case, than to be the Remembrancer of this Generation with what Testimony has formerly been given against this piece of Superstition, by learned Protestants themselves, even such as were our Opposites in the other case, who to this *Plea* of the Church of *England*, that they receive not the sign of the Cross as from the Papists, but from the Fathers of the Primitive Church, gives them this Answer.

1. The Fathers can be no Vizard for a Rite whereof the Pagans, Jews, or Hereticks were the Fathers and first begetters. It was the Fault of one *Alexander*, that he sang the Psalms of *Valentinus*; It is ours, that we use his Cross. I call it his, because he was the first that used this Sign, the very first that made account of it, as appears by *Irenæus*, *lib.* 1. *c.* 1. And he did wrest the Scriptures to the Crosses Commendation.——He termed him *Crux* to shew a purging Power in him, because he held the Cross a Purger of Man's Sin.——And that he was drawn into this Opinion by the same means that Papists are drawn into it, by a supposed Dedication of it in the Blood of Christ [not considering that by this conceit Men may adore every Thorn-Bush, because the Holy Head of Jesus was embrued with Blood by that Crown of Thorns wherewith he was crowned.] And *Valentinus* does confess his *Æon* was without a Figure, until Christ by his Death upon the Cross gave him one, and till now we never read of any that used the Figure of the Cross before him, or made any account of it. And therefore he it is (for ought we know) even *Valentinus*, that first brought it into Request and Reckoning. And who then will suffer us to say we borrow it from the Fathers, and not from him?——See we not then, that to say we follow the Fathers in the Cross, (*Valentinus* the Heretick being the first Deviser of it) we are forced to fly like *Eutropius* to the very same Sanctuary, which we have denied and shut up to others.

Dr. *Fulk* against *Sound.* c. 14.

The Fathers can be no Vizard for a Ceremony which has been abused since, or what though from the Fathers we take this sign? This helpeth not till the Fathers use be justified, which will never be.——He, that readeth the Fathers Writings will meet indeed with such a *Chaos*, as will make him afraid, (I say not to fall into it) but even to behold it. Who can brook the Efficacy which *Tertullian* gave it? *The Flesh is signed, that the Soul may be defended.* The Necessity which *Cyprian* gave

gave it in Baptism, *Ungi necesse baptizatum—baptizati signo Dominico consummantur.* The Fathers call this Sign *Spirituale Signaculum*, (to wit) because it bringeth the Spirit, for which one place may serve our turn, *Sequitur spirituale Signaculum, quia post fontem superest ut perfectio fiat, quando ad invocationem Sacerdos, Spiritus sanctus infunditur.* And in the opinion of the Fathers the Water of Baptism is nothing worth without the Cross. In the opinion of the Fathers, the Cross is the Terror of the Devil, and an impregnable Wall against him, so that they used the Cross themselves when in any danger. In the opinion of the Fathers the Cross is *Insigne Regni, et clavis Paradisi.* Last of all in the opinion of the Fathers, the Cross is so necessary, as that it is to be made, coming and going, sitting and standing, even *ad omnem incessum*, at every stop; and *ad omnem actum*, in every Action that we do.

And to shew the Superstition of the Cross from *Tertullian*, take a View of it, as set down by the *Author of the case of the Cross*——*Upon every motion* (saith he) *at their going out, and coming in, when they put on their Garments or Shoes, at the Bath, or at Meals, when they lighted up their Candles, or went to Bed, whatever almost they did in any part of their Conversation, still they would even wear out their Foreheads with the Sign of the Cross.* And is not this a sad Story? yet our Author brings this in Favour of it.

Mr. *Hooker* is brought in as drawing Mr. *Goulart* as it were by the Hair of the Head, to clear the Fathers from the Superstition of the Cross, which he doth not, save in comparison of the Popish Merit and Enchantment which afterward crept in. As for the operative Power which they placed in the Oily Cross, he flatly condemneth them.

And whereas it is said that the Cross (among Protestants) coming after the Water (in Baptism) is an Acknowledgment of its Subjection to it. My Author answers, This ill beseemeth our Mouths, who cannot endure the Papist when he makes the same excuse. The Cross which cometh after the Consecration in the Lords Supper belongeth not to it. We oppose against him: The Consecration doth reach to the whole Administration, whatsoever Sign is administred it cannot but (at least) in shew pertain to it. Therefore it is a part of the Sacrament, saith the *Canon*. So all the while the Cross is within the Celebration of Baptism, it is morally a part thereof: for Example, the Feast came after the worshipping of the Calf; yet because it pertained to the Solemnity, the Apostle not only counteth it a part of the Idols Service, but such a principal part as includeth all the rest that went before, 1 *Cor.* 10.

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If thou hast made a Separation, (between the Cross and the Water) thou hast made a fair hand. This very Separation maketh the Cross to be a sign of a divers species, and so by consequent to be an Addition, which is unlawful: And the matter of this Separation (boasted of) maketh the after-place of the Cross yet worse——For what though the Cross and the Water be divers in matter? So are the Bread and the Wine in the Supper, [yet] they make one Refection in Christ, and so grow to be formally one: and so may these grow to be one likewise, because they make one investing into the Church. And doth not the Cross touch the Water as near as the Wine doth touch the Bread? The Postation of the Wine doth not prejudice it, therefore the postponing of the Cross doth not prejudice it.——As long as the Cross and the Water [our Cross and the Popish] are seen in the same Solemnity of Baptism, the Separation is insufficient.——Is not Baptism the Seal of the Heavenly King? and can any new print be added to the Seal of a King without Treason? Do we not cry out upon the Dove, let down of old upon the baptized for a Sign of Regeneration by the Spirit? (one of which I saw (saith my Author) at *Wickham* not abolished some 25 Years past) sure, a Sign in such manner determined, with State in Baptism, we can easily prove to have been abhorred throughout all Ages, however in the particular of the Cross, the Oyl and some other Signs, God permitted the ancient Fathers to fail in Heart to bring in (through their oversight against their own general Doctrine) that Apostacy from the Faith which he foretold. [Thus much concerning the Cross as grounded upon Antiquity, or as coming from the Fathers.]

2. Concerning that Text in *Ezekiel* 9. 4. Our Author saith that some of the Authors whom *Jerom* followed understood this Sign to be spiritual and not an outward *Mark*, which is also the Tenent of our Writers: [Dr. *Fulk* against *Martin*.] If our Opposites have found out since the Sign of the outward Cross in this place, I would they would tell us which way they came by it? [and after he has set down various opinions about altering the form of the Hebrew Characters, he tells us out of *Baronius*, that *Ezra* never changed the Hebrew Letters, that the old ancient Copies of the Hebrew Bibles were many of them remaining in *Ezra*'s time, and that they are all in one Character, to wit, the old and ancient Characters of the Hebrews.——And that the whole matter is of late brought clearly to light by *Jo. Scaliger*, who writes thus, *The old Hebrew and Samaritan* Letters be all one, and the Letter *Tau* in neither of them is like a Cross,

Cross, or the Greek or Roman *T*. *Hieron* what he writes of *Ezra*'s altering the old Samaritan *Tau*, he taketh word by word out of *Origen*, in *Ezechiel*. *Origen* was deceived by a Jew, on whose bare Relation he grounded himself, which Relation was also false.——We must give the Fathers leave to play, according to their own Pleasure, not only to fetch the sign of the Cross out of this *Tau*, but also out of the two Stieks which the Widow of *Sarepta* gathered, yea to fetch a Cross and a *T* too out of the 300 Souldiers of *Gideon*. And (as the Author of the Case of the Cross tells us) "They of the "Romish Church can discern the Cross in the Figure of a Mans Face, "by the placing the Nose betwixt the two Eyes, and much more in "the whole Body of Man with his Arms extended; They can discern it in the Sword in Paradise, and in the Cross Stick that *Noah*'s "Dove brought back into the Ark. And indeed some of the Fathers "(saith he) bent their Imaginations something that way, and would "fancy the Figure of the Cross in *Moses* stretching out his Arms "while the Israelites were fighting with *Amaleck*, and in the paschal "Lamb when the Spit went through it. Surely these things may sufficiently inform us, that let Men be never so great, or never so much reverenced as Fathers, &c. Yet God is no Respecter of Persons, but if they will follow their own fancies, and be adding to his Institutions, he will even smite them with Stupidity, that the Childishness of the Fathers may appear to very Children; and that all may fear God, and keep his Commandments, without adding to them, or taking from them, according to *Deut.* 12. 32. *Deut.* 4. 2.

3. There is a great pretence that *Constantine* the great had Direction probably from Heaven to make this sign of the Cross in his Banner; because he dreamed he saw such a sign in the Firmament with ἐν τούτῳ νίκα, *in hoc vince*, [overcome in this] written in it. To this it is answered. It was not the Sign of the Cross that appeared, but a sight somewhat like it, to wit, a mark of Christ's Name X° P. after this manner ☧, or as *Lypsius* upon the view of ancient Copies draws it after another manner more different from the sign of the Cross, than the former. The former of these cometh nearest to the Description of *Eusebius*, therefore the latter may be some Imitation of it. But be this Dream or Vision what it will, we find not that *Constantine* had any Authority to turn it into a Religious Ritual, much less to make it consecratory to many Rites in Worship, and particularly in Baptism. These are after-Inventions: for whatsoever Honour hath accrued to the Cross (saith our Author) by this Dream or Vision, it came either from the

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Alchymie of the Bishops in those days who drew a Cross out of the light which *Constantine* saw, or from the Sophistry of Papists since.

The Truth is the Vision which St. *Steven* saw at his Martyrdom, *Acts* 7. and that which St. *Paul* had at his Conversion, *Acts* 9. are not only delivered to us by Divine Testimony, but were nothing inferiour to that of *Constantine*, which whether it were a Dream or a Vision, is not certain, the Story giving it both ways; yet who so absurd to turn the Visions of St. *Stephen* and St. *Paul* into Rituals, or to affix them to Christ's Ordinances? When Men do assume this Liberty without Divine Warrant, many Evils do follow upon such doings. How much innocent Blood has been shed about this sign of the Cross, is not easily to be estimated? and indeed for the sake of this and other such Inventions, Christians have hated one another with cruel Hatred, as late Years have shewed. Men more account of those Traditions, than of the Word of God by far. We have seen it with our Eyes. A Man might be a common Drunkard, and yet permitted to preach in the Pulpit. But if he would not use the sign of the Cross, and the Surplice, away with him. This kind of Zeal shews that it is from beneath, it is not of God.

And so long as these things remain, and are forced on by Authority, there will be continual Strife, Contention, and Devouring amongst Christians: as it was so from the Beginning of them, so it will be to the end of them: because an evil Plant will bring forth according to its Nature. We have more sacred Institutions, then we can well observe. Why do we seek to burthen our selves or others, in matters of Religion, with the Commandments and Doctrines of Men? all which are to perish; and God in Mercy hasten the time, that God's People may have but one Heart, and one Way. *Amen.*

POSTSCRIPT.

SECT. I.

Of the Manner of Marriages among the Baptized Believers, and that they are warrantable by God's Law.

SOme of the Baptized Believers having been prosecuted as Offenders, for not conforming to the Ceremonies of the Ring, and kneeling to the Altar in the Celebration of Marriage; we shall therefore humbly offer our Reasons why we dissent from those Ceremonies; and why also our Marriages are good in the Eye of the Law, (for the Substance of them) the omission of these Ceremonies, &c. notwithstanding.

But first the Reader is desired to take notice, that we are not against, but for the publick Solemnization of Marriage according to the Law of the Land, save that there are some Ceremonies used therein which we cannot comply with. And because some of the Priests will not marry us at all, and others will not do it, unless we conform to all the Ceremonies required in the Service-Book; this puts us upon a necessity to have it done without them, and the manner thus:

The Parties to be married being qualified for that State of Life, according to the Law of God, and the Law of the Land, as to the Degrees, &c. therein limited; They call together a competent number of their Relations and Friends: And having usually some of our Ministry present with them, the Parties concern'd do declare their Contract formerly made between Themselves, and with the Advice of their Friends, if Occasion require it: *And then taking each other by the Hand, do declare, That they from that day forward, during their mutual Lives together, do enter into the State of Marriage, using the Words, or the Substance of them, which are appointed for the Words of Marriage in the Service-Book,* (as acknowledging them Words to be very fit for that purpose.) *And then a Writing is signed by the Parties married,* &c

to keep in memory the Contract and Covenant of their Marriage, to this effect:

These are to testify to all Men, that we A. B. of, &c. and C. D. of, &c. have, the day of the Date hereof, entred into the Covenant and State of Marriage, according to a solemn Contract heretofore made between our selves, and with the Consent of such as are concern'd in order thereunto: And we do now, in the Presence of Almighty God, and the Witnesses hereafter named, ratify the said Contract and Covenant Act of Marriage this day verbally made; in both which we do, in the Fear of God, mutually and solemnly, and for our Parts respectively promise, in the Strength of God, to live together in the State of Marriage, according to God's Ordinance, from this day forward, to love each other as Husband and Wife, and faithfully to perform all the Duties to which we are bound by God's Law, and the good Laws of the Land, in that Case provided, till the Lord by Death shall separate us. In Testimony whereof we have hereunto set our Hands, the day of, &c.

Then is annexed a Certificate of the Witnesses, thus:

WE *whose Names are subscribed, do testify, That the above-said A. B. and C. D. the Day and Year above-said, did mutually take each other into the State of Marriage, acknowledging the Contract and Covenant, and ratifying the same by Word, and by the Subscription thereof as above-said. In Witness whereof, we do hereunto set our Hands the Day and Year above-said.*

After these things, some suitable Counsel or Instruction is given to the Parties (but no Man takes upon him the Office to marry any, that being the proper Act of the Parties themselves) and then Prayer is made to God for his Blessing upon the Parties married, &c.

And now whether Marriages thus made, are justifiable by the Law of God, is first to be considered.

To begin with the Institution of Marriage, *Gen.* 2. 23, 24. there we find all that is essential to Marriage: For he that had the right to dispose of the Woman, was pleased to bring her and give her to *Adam*. And *Moses* tells us, That *they who are thus joined together, are one Flesh*; and are to forsake all other Relations in comparison of that Relation.

The Marriage-Covenant is explained by God himself, *Mal.* 2. 14. *She is thy Companion, and Wife of thy Covenant, of which he himself* (says

(says the Prophet) *had been a Witness*: For whoever else are Witnesses in this Case, God is the Principal, and will punish such as break their Marriage-Covenant.

And thus it appears, that a Marriage-Covenant between Persons who may lawfully marry, with Witness upon it, are the Essentials of this Ordinance; which is yet more evident in the Case of *Boaz* and *Ruth*, Ruth. 4. 9, 10, 11. And then we may be sure that God appointed no Ceremony in the Institution of Marriage; nor do we find any Ceremony made necessary to the Celebration of Marriage in the Old and New Testament; for that passage of *loosing the Shoe*, *Deut.* 25. 7, 9. and *Ruth* 4. 7. pertains not to Marriage, but concerns him that refuses to raise up Seed in *Israel* to his deceased Brother.

And as there is no Ceremony ordained, so there is no one certain Form for the Celebration of Marriage appointed by the Word of God; but this seems rather to be left to Liberty, as appears in the Case of *Isaac*, Gen. 24. 67. and the Marriage of *Jacob*, Gen. 29. 21, 22, 23. and many others.

The chief Things to be observed in Marriage, since the Earth was replenished with Inhabitants, are these, *That regard be had to Religion*, that a Believer marry not with an Infidel; that the Persons to be married, come not *within the Degrees prohibited* in respect of *Consanguinity* and *Affinity*. That the Conjunction, and Marriage-Covenant be between one Man and one Woman; plurality of Wives is utterly irreconcileable with the Institution of Marriage, and with the Doctrine of the Gospel, as appears *Mat.* 19. 8. 1 *Cor.* 7. 2.

And because our Blessed Saviour has taught his Followers to discern what Corruptions have crept into God's Ordinances, by observing the first Institution of them, and particularly this of Marriage, *Mat.* 19. 8. for here he takes down even a Precept of *Moses*, because it could not stand with the Purity and Simplicity of Marriage in the Institution of it. We therefore confess, with the Learned Casuist, Mr. *Hugo Grotius*, that though *the Conjunction of Male and Female, whereby Mankind is propagated, is a thing most worthy the care of Laws*; yet where God's Law is known, it is especially to be consulted, both for Matter and Form, in the Things he hath ordained. And therefore we doubt not, but what Rules are given by the Law of God in the Case of Marriage are sufficient, at least so far, as that such as are married according to them have all things that are necessary to justify their Marriages in the sight of God and

Man. Otherwise it will greatly reflect upon the Wisdom and Goodness of God, to say he has made this Ordinance for the Good of Mankind, and yet left it defective in the very Essentials of it; and sure it would magnify Man too much to suppose him capable to mend this Ordinance; but *if God make any thing crooked, it cannot be made straight, and that which he hath not made at all, cannot be numbred* [*with his Works, or counted a necessary part of them.*] Eccles. 1. 14, 15.

And seeing no Ceremony in Marriage has been imposed by the Almighty (as in some other of his Ordinances he has appointed) let no Man judg one another to be unlawfully married, because some Ceremonies devised by Men are not observed, perhaps it might be as strongly argued *retro*, That they who have taken upon them to add such their devised Toys, (as Dr. *Willet* calls the Popish Ceremonies) have not true Marriage. But as the first is groundless, so this would be uncharitable.

And therefore we deny not but that some decent Usages or Ceremonies may be appointed by Authority for the more convenient Celebration of Marriage, and that the Contempt of them may be justly corrected, for the Honour of the Power Magistratical: But then it is also to be considered, that as in other Ordinances of God, so also in this, Men, yea Authorities in most Nations of the World, have grosly abused this Liberty, by ordaining things ridiculous and sinful in the solemnizing of their Nuptial Contracts, as shall be shewed. And therefore when and where such Prophanations are found, it is commendable always, and sometimes necessary, for such as God has enlightened to see such Corruptions, to endeavour after a modest and prudent manner, to have all the Ways of God, and particularly this of Marriage, to have them, I say, restored to their Purity, by being purged from such things as tend to the Profanation of them.

And herein the Learned of the Church of *England* are our Precedents: for when they came to consider the Popish Ceremonies used in their Marriages, they were so far from conforming to them, or judging those Marriages to be null which were made without them, that they boldly testify against them, and some laid down their Lives among the Martyrs in opposition to the Papists Opinion and Practice in the case of Marriage, as *Woodman* and *Rembridge*. This is testified by Dr. *Willis*, *Synops.* p. 679. And where also he labours much to shew the Errors of the Papists, both in their Doctrine and Practice concerning Marriage, and their Ceremonies used therein, and particularly upon this ground, Because they made the Celebration of Marriage a Sacramental,

mental or religious Acts, and had no word of Institution in the Scriptures for so doing.

This therefore which has been said concerning the Essentials of Marriage, will (as we conceive) warrant our Marriage-Covenants and Contracts, to be according to God's Law; And tho we desire and endeavour to come as near as we can to the Custom of our Nation in the Celebration of Marriage, which we confess to be of the Nature of moral and civil Contracts of the highest degree, and therefore under the cognizance of the Power Magistratical; yet when the Church of *England* interposes with her Power Ecclesiastical, to oblige us to the observance of her Ceremonies, which are not of the Essence of Marriages, nor, so far as we can judg, such as we can answer to God, nor act in with the Peace of our own Souls, we are then constrained, as in other cases, so in this, to satisfy our selves in a diligent observance of the Rules of God's Law, both for the Substance and Celebration of our Nuptial Contracts; and in so doing, we suppose both the Statute and Civil Law, as well as the Law of Reason, will at least so far favour us, as to vindicate us therein to have all things necessary and essential to the solemn Ordinance of Marriage, which also we shall endeavour to demonstrate in the next Section.

SECT. II.

The Law of the Land does not null or make void the Marriages of the Baptized Believers, but does rather establish them.

THAT this also is no uncertain Position, but a clear Truth, will appear, if we consider, first, That the chief Grounds or prime Foundations of the Laws of *England* are clearly for us; for thus saith a learned Lawyer,

The first Ground of the Law of England *is the Law of Reason, which is to be kept in this Realm as it is in all other Realms, and as of necessity it must be; and because it is written in the Heart, therefore it may not be put away nor changed; it is never changeable by diversity of Place nor Time; and therefore against this Law, Prescription, Statute, nor Custom may not prevail: and if any be brought against it, they be not Prescriptions, Statutes, nor Customs, but Things void and against Justice.* Doct. & Stud. l. 1. c. 5. & c. 2.

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The second Ground of the Law of England *is the Law of God.* And upon these Grounds (I suppose) was that excellent Statute made in the case of Marriage, wherein we have these Words, as they are quoted by a learned Man, viz. *That no Reservation or Prohibition (God's Law except) shall trouble or impeach any Marriage, 12 Hen. 8. c. 38. Will. Synop. p. 711.* Of which Statute, Bishop *Hall* gives this account, *i. e. The Statute of 32. Hen. 8. c. 38. intending to marr the Romish Market of gainful and injurious Dispensations, professeth to allow all Marriages that are not prohibited by God's Law*: and this Law is not yet repealed. And therefore it hence appears that no Law was then thought necessary to the Essence of Marriage, but the Law of God. And tho there be a Proviso in a certain Statute made in the Reign of *Edw. 6.* that this Statute shall not give Liberty to marry without the Ceremonies appointed in the Service-Book, yet it does not null any Marriages that had been, or that might after be made with the Omission of them, or at least some of them: for Marriages we know there have been, and are frequently made by divers Ministers of the Church of *England*, without the Banes, and some other Rites, as well as by Licences obtained, which could not be done, if the Intent of the said Proviso were to make all Marriages null and void, which are made without Banes, and all the Rites appointed in the Service-Book.

But lest this should be taken for my private Opinion only, I will here alledg the Judgment of such as are esteemed among the best learned in the Law, whether we respect the Statute or Civil Law. And first, Mr. *Swinburn*, Bachelor of the Civil Law, tells us, *That an unsolemn Marriage, is not therefore no Marriage, because it is unsolemn, the Banes perhaps not being published, or the Marriage being not celebrated in the Face of the Church, but privately in a Chamber, or some other Rite or Ceremony being omitted; but it is nevertheless reputed for true Marriage, both in the Ecclesiastical Courts in respect of the Essence or Knot of Matrimony, and in Temporal Courts in respect of the Wives Dowry, and other Legal Effects.* Treat. of last *Will.* p. 20, 21.

And to the same effect speaketh *Espenc.* c. 11. *Clandest. Matrimo. Consensus facit Nuptias, sed eorum qui sui jure sunt; It is the consent of the Parties which make the Marriage, they being such as are at their own Dispose.* And again,

Si pompa aliaq; nuptiarum Celebritas omittatur, &c. If the Pomps and Celebrity of Marriage be omitted, nothing is wanting to the Firmness and Sureness of Marriage. *Cod. L. 5. tit. 5. tit. 2.*

And

And the Canon Law tells us; *Nuptiarum copula Dei mandato perficitur*; *The Marriage-Bond is perfected by the Commandment of God.*

Thus we see that Ceremonies are not of the Essence of Marriage, that if the Command of God be observed, Marriage is perfect. And these Testimonies are the more considerable to our purpose, because they are alledged against the Papists, by a learned Protestant, because they doted more then ordinary upon nuptial Ceremonies. *Willet. Synops. p.* 713. 740. And so rational and necessary it is, that the Ceremonies appointed either by the Papists or others, should not be esteemed to belong at all to the essence of Marriage, that *Durandus*, an eminent Papist, tells us, as he is quoted by Dr. *Willet*, *That there is neither any outward Holy Sign, nor* [no Minister] *necessary in Matrimony besides the Parties*; for, saith he, *Marrimony may be solemnized by a Proctor between Parties that are absent.* So then the Presence of a Priest is not of the Essence of Marriage, seeing it may be celebrated without them.

And which is yet more; *Bellarmine*, that so much renowned *Cardinal*, is alledged by the said Dr. *Willet*, saying, *That Marriage being of the Nature of Contracts, the Parties themselves suffice, and that it may be done in their Absence.* [meaning still, that all Contracts be witnessed.]

And here the Words of Mr. *Diodate* are worthy of Remembrance upon *Mal.* 2. 15. *Did not God in the beginning create* Adam *alone, out of whom he framed* Eve *to be his Wife, without creating any more Women for one Man, or more Men for one Woman? shewing thereby, that as he appointed Matrimony* by one only Law [in which to be sure there was no Ceremonies] *of lawful Conjunction, it likewise ought to be one with one, and two in the same Flesh.*

From all which it is apparent that there may be lawful Marriage where there is no Ceremonies, much more without the Ceremonies of the Ring, and bowing at the Altar, and the Ceremonies are not therefore in any-wise to be made essential to Marriage, and that the Contract between two Persons lawfully qualified for the State of Marriage, and their actual taking each other into the Relation and Covenant of Husband and Wife, before sufficient Witness, is essential, firm, and lawful Marriage, and consequently that the Marriages made amongst the baptized Believers are true Marriages in the Eye of the Law of this Land.

And to make this yet more evident, I will conclude this Section with the united Authority of the late Lord Cheif Justice *Hales*, and Dr. *Burnet*, who fully express themselves for the Sufficiency of Marriages as made by the present Dissenters. And thus the Doctor speaks.

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He (that is, Judg Hale) *was very cautious in declaring their Marriage void, and so bastarding their Children. But he considered Marriage and Succession as a right of Nature, from which none ought to be barred, what Mistakes soever they might be under in the point of revealed Religion; and therefore in a Trial that was before him, when a Quaker was sued for some Debts owing by his Wife before he married her; and the Quaker pretended it was no Marriage that had past between them, since it was not solemniz'd according to the Rules of the Church of* England: *He declared that he was not willing on his own Opinion to make their Children bastards, and gave Direction to the Jury to find it special, which they did ——— He governed himself indeed* (saith Dr. *Burnet*) *by the Law of the Gospel, of doing to others what he would have others do to him; and therefore because he would have thought it a Hardship, not without Cruelty, if amongst the Papists all Marriages were nulled, which had not been made with all the Ceremonies in the Roman Ritual, so he applying this to the case of the Sectaries, he thought all Marriages made according to the several Persuasions of Men, ought to have their Effects in Law.*

Of how great Value the Judgment of this worthy Man is in all Courts of Judicature, is also testified by this learned Doctor in these words; *His Opinion in points of Law generally passes as an unquestionable Authority, and is often pleaded in all the Courts of Justice.* So that such as out of a Fancy to some unnecessary Ceremonies, would null all Marriages amongst Dissenters, though made as publickly and solemnly as we can, and every way agreeable to the Law of God, and the Rules of Reason, will see themselves concern'd we hope, to be better advised than to throw Dirt in the face of this great Patriot of the Law, as if he should be a publick Defender of Whoredom; for so do some of our rash Ceremonialists esteem and speak of all Marriages wherein their Ceremonies are omitted.

Furthermore; If in this, or any other Nation, God's Ordinances should become, or be reputed to be Nullities; when in the observation of them, the Ceremonies appointed by the Church (or those that call themselves so) are omitted, there could be little certainty of a right or effectual enjoyment of any of them: For Baptism, Confirmation, the Lord's Table, Ordination, Excommunication (and what not) as well as Marriage, has been, and is incumbred with so many of the Ceremonies of Mens devising, that it's not easy to number them, much less to observe them. But yet such has been the Wisdom of the greatest Ceremonialists, as to be afraid to annul an Ordinance, tho the Ceremonies of the Church were omit-

ed, and particularly in the Case of Baptism, Ordination, and Marriages. Do not the Protestants allow of all these among the Papists, though many Ceremonies be used therein which they disallow? Yea, there is no doubt, but both the Church of *England*, and the Church of *Rome*, would admit the Baptism of our Children for a valid Baptism, which was performed upon their personal profession of Faith and Repentance, and by Immersion, and by one whom they esteem a Lay-man, because nothing is wanting in our Baptism which pertains to the essence of the Ordinance, though we reject all their Rites, *Sponsors*, *Crossings*, &c. And therefore by a parity of Reason, our Marriages being warranted by God's Law in all things essential to Marriage, must be allowed good and honest Marriages, though no Priest nor Ring, &c. was concern'd in them.

I say again, Does not the Church of *England* hold the Ordination received in the Papacy to be valid? and yet they condemn some Ceremonies which they use in their Ordinations for superstitious Vanities; neither do they marry those Papists a second time who become Protestants, but do account their Marriages valid and good: and yet their Marriages were not celebrated according to the Rites of the Church of *England*, nor by their Ministers. And why? surely because neither the Law of God, nor the Law of the Land, do say they are null or void. And then sure I am, if they will be but as kind to us as to Papists, they must grant our Marriages to be more justifiable of the two. For, 1. ours is no where condemned by the Law of God, nor the Law of the Land, any more than theirs. And, 2. we bring not in any Roman Rites in the Celebration of our Marriages, as perhaps they do in theirs; but we keep as near the Law of the Land in the Celebration of Marriage as we can, and do undoubtedly keep to the Law of God and right Reason therein, as much as any, as has been shewed.

SECT.

SECT. III.

Of the most important Question touching the case depending, *viz. Whether it be necessary that Marriages should be celebrated by a Minister? and whether they may be valid and lawful without them?*

THis is the Question propounded by that learned and worthy Man Bp. *Hall*, in his Book of *Resolut.* p. 361. *c.* 8. whose Answer will greatly strengthen that which we have said respecting the Law of God, for thus he speaks:

It is no marvel (saith he) *if the Church of* Rome (*which hold Matrimony a Sacrament, conferring Grace by the very Work wrought*) *require an absolute Necessity of the Priests hand in so holy an Act: but for us who* (*though reverently esteeming that sacred Institution, yet*) *set it a Key lower, it admits of too much Question, whether we need to stand upon the terms of a Minister's Agency in the Performance of that solemn Action?* So then it is a clear case it seems, unless we fall back to the Papists to make Marriage a Sacrament, there is no absolute Necessity to have a Priest to celebrate Marriage, and consequently it may be done lawfully (by God's Law at least) without them. And assuredly that Doctrine which makes a Minister of God absolutely necessary to the Celebration of Marriages can in no wise be true, because it is most unreasonable to impeach all those Marriages which all the World over, from the beginning to this day, have been celebrated without them: If then all Nations have all things that are essential to Marriage, and yet few Nations have had God's faithful Ministers to celebrate it, it is manifest there may be lawful Marriages without a Minister in all Nations, seeing the Essentials of Marriage is the same in all Nations.

But though the Bishop be for us thus far, yet he seems to be against us in that which follows, for thus he writes; *That as it is requisite* (*even according to the Roman Constitutions*) *that he who is entrusted with the cure of our Souls, should besides other Witnesses be both present and active in, and at our domestick Contracts of Matrimony; so by the Laws both of our Church and Kingdom, it is necessary he should have his hand in the publick Celebration of them; there may then be firm Contracts, there cannot be lawful Mariages without Gods Ministers.*

But (reserving the Honour due to so grave a Writer) I must answer thus; 1. If there may be firm Contracts without a Priest, that is, Contracts made with consent of Parents, &c. and before sufficient Witnesses, and firm, that is, such Contracts as cannot lawfully be broken (and less than such he cannot mean); then I see not but that the Substance, or all that is essential to Marriage may be attained without the Priests hand, even in the Judgment of this learned Bishop. But 2. I answer further, that by the Testimonies of divers learned Men, both in the Roman Constitutions, and the Law of this Land, which we have alledged in the former *Section*, the Bishop is mistaken when he says the Law of this Kingdom does make the Priests hand so necessary, that Marriage cannot be lawful without them. Sure *Judg Hale* understood the Law of the Kingdom, yet he thought *all Marriages made according to the several Perswasions of Men, ought to have their Effects in Law*: and indeed should it be otherwise, that the Papists and other Dissenters should have their Marriages nulled, which were not celebrated by a Minister of the Church of *England*, it would cause great Confusion in the Land: and again they must all be prohibited Marriage, who are unmarried among the Dissenters, and excommunicated by the Church of *England*, for they pretend they cannot lawfully marry Persons excommunicated; and how any Church comes to assume Power to make such Laws, we cannot understand; only of this we are sure, neither the Law of God nor Reason (the prime Foundation of all good Laws) does warrant any Church in so doing.

The Proof which the Bishop seems most to rest upon as the Strength of his Opinion, is, *because Christians do know Marriage to be an Holy Institution of God himself, which he not only ordained, but actually celebrated between the first couple, Eve, and which being for the Propagation of an Holy Seed, requires a special Benediction*; and how can we think any Man meet for this Office but the Man of God set over us in the Lord?

But sure these Premisses are not at all apt to bear this Conclusion, *that none but a Priest may celebrate Marriage*. The Argument seems more naturally to be deduced thus: *God the Father of Adam, (Luke 3. ult.) who also had the right to dispose of the Woman, and to give her in Marriage, did celebrate Marriage between Adam and Eve. Ergo, The Father, or those who have right to dispose of the Parties to be wed, may lawfully celebrate the Marriage, and pray for a special Benediction*; see 1 Cor. 7. 38. And for this we have some light from the Word of God in other places (as has been shewed): but that God's Ministers were either in the

the time of the Law, or of the Gospel, concern'd (as God's Ministers) to celebrate Marriages, does not appear from any hint in the Word of God. And certainly had the Apostle been of this Bishop's mind, he would have given us Direction either by his own Practice, or some other way, touching this matter; but that any of the Apostles ever married any body, will never be proved: And though Jesus was at a Wedding and wrought a Miracle there, *John* 2. yet neither he nor any of his Disciples did celebrate the Marriage, and then why may we not in reason think Marriage may be lawfully celebrated without a Priest? We may be sure that those who called Christ and his Disciples to this Marriage, were such as had a love to him, and being in *Galilee*, the place where he had been conversant, and where also his manner was to perform publick Ministerial Acts (*Luke* 4. 14. 16.) the Persons to be married, or their Relations, would as soon have desired his Assistance in the Celebration of their Marriage, as any other Minister: but the Truth is, neither he, nor any of the Priests were imploied in that matter that we read of: And hence we may well conclude there can be no necessity to have Marriage celebrated with a Priest; and then it may lawfully be done without them. And though we grant a Minister may be as fit, and perhaps more fit than another Christian, to give good Counsel to, and pray for the new-married Couple, yet it is apparent the Text, which the Bishop seems to alledg to that purpose, intends no such thing at all, as the place being read, will fully demonstrate, 1 *Cor.* 7. 39. *The Wife is bound by the Law as long as her Husband liveth: but if her Husband be dead, she is at Liberty to be married to whom she will, only in the Lord.* Now the Bishop infers thus; *If all our Marriages must be (according to the Apostle's charge) made in the Lord, who so meet to pronounce God's Ratification of our Marriages, as he who is the profest Herald of the Almighty?* But the Apostle does not at all speak of the Person that must celebrate Marriage, but of the Person with whom a Christian may lawfully marry, as *Diodate* and others do fitly expound the place. And though we yield willingly that a Man of God is a fit Person to declare God's Will and Authority in the Ratification of our Marriages, yet it follows not at all, that none but a Man of God may be fit to do this, or that none may lawfully do it but a Herald of the Almighty. But what needs many words? The Bishop answers the Question, where he tells us, that though the Papists make it absolutely necessary to have a Minister's hand in the act of Marriage, yet the Protestants *set it a Key lower*; and confesses that *it admits of too much question, whether we*

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weak to stand upon the terms of a Minister's Agency in the Performance of that solemn Action. So then this solemn Action of Marriage may be done without a Minister's Agency; therefore there may be lawful Marriages without God's Ministers: this being granted, we acknowledg it very commendable to have them present, if they may be obtained.

But now it would be considered, whether the Persons to be married may not lawfully be satisfied that the Person whom they imploy in the Celebration of their Marriage, is in their Judgment a lawful Minister, or Man of God (supposing it necessary to have such a Man to do the Business.) This seems rational, and if so, I doubt there will be a great difficulty in the case. And to be plain, though we could admit very willingly of the Prayer of a sober and pious Minister of the Church of *England* in the Business of our Nuptials; Yet, when we are required to kneel before one whom we know to be a wicked drunken Person, *&c.* how should we act Faith in his Prayer, when God himself tells us, *The Prayers of the Wicked are an Abomination to him?* We may not safely conform to such things though the Laws of Men do require it. And indeed the Bishop seems to favour us in such a strait as this: for he saith, *The Laws of Men do not, ought not, cannot bind your Consciences as of themselves; but if they be just, they bind you in Conscience to Obedience.* Now to this we do most heartily subscribe, only desiring we may have leave to consider what is just or unjust in this case, and then we doubt not of our Duty to obey actively what the Law justly requires, or else to suffer patiently what it imposes.

Now though we can find no ground to believe that to celebrate Marriage is a ministerial act (though a Minister may do it) yet we do not refuse the Ministers of the Church of *England*, because such, but because they will not ratify our Contracts unless we conform to such things as seem to us to be sinful (as we shall shew in the next Section.) And if it were a work peculiar to God's Ministers, our Straits in coming to the Priests would be greater than they are, because we know God does not allow wicked Men to take his Word into their Mouths, specially when they hate to be reformed, *Psal.* 50. 16. And besides, we believe and know, we have of those that more fully agree with us in matters of Religion, that are Ministers of Christ. And therefore were Marriage (in the Celebration of it) a Ministerial Work, we should not fail to have it rightly done by them; but this is not our Perswasion: though we think as reverently of this Ordinance as any, yet we believe it most fit to be testified before those who are appointed by the Laws of the Land, and therefore do

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what with a good Conscience we can to have it so, but being rejected (as we have shewed) we know our Marriages are not therefore null; because we have all that is essential to lawful Marriage, both in the Eye of the Law of God, and the Law of the Land also. For the first, this Learned Prelate does not deny, whilst *he makes not a Minister absolutely necessary to the Celebration of Marriage*. And the Learned Judg *Hale* grants the second, *that our Marriages ought to have their Effects in Law*. And *Durand* (a Man well skill'd in the Romish Constitutions) tells us, *There is no holy Sign, nor no Minister necessary in Matrimony, &c.* as we have shewed. And besides this, it is fully shewed by this learned Bishop, that many Christians in all Ages have done, and may lawfully do some things, tho they be *Lay-men*, which are most fitly to be done by such as have a Ministerial Authority thereunto, namely, to *catechise, defend and propagate the Gospel*. Such were *Origen, Aristides, Hegesippus, Justin*, and many others; see his Book of *Resolut. p.* 265. *chap.* 10. Those who called themselves Catholicks in *Augustin's* time, did allow the Baptism and other sacred Acts of the *Donatists, &c.* to be valid. It is strange then that the Marriages of the present Dissenters should be made Nullities by the common Protestants, who themselves are esteemed but Dissenters in a Neighbour Nation, and therefore their Marriages are as liable to censure there as ours are here; but these are Hardships and Cruelties in the Opinion of that learned Lawyer, the late Lord Chief Justice *Hale*.

SECT. IV.

Of the Rituals of the Church of England *concerning Marriage, and the Reasons why the Baptized Believers comply not with them.*

HOW gladly we should be to see an end of all Contention amongst Christians about unnecessary Ceremonies, we have shewed in our *Friendly Epistle*, and our late *Apology*, wherein also we have professed our earnest Desire for Concord with all that love the Lord Jesus, and more particularly with the Church of *England*. But it seems all that we can offer below a full compliance even with the most useless Ceremonies, is not thought worth the notice of the present Clergy, who now do many of them wonderfully exalt themselves despi-

despising such as differ from them, and that so much the more as by how much we seek to them for Peace.

Marriage-Covenants we confess are things of that nature and importance, that they are worthy the care of the Laws of all Nations. But such has been the unhappiness of the Churches which are National, as to ordain such things in order to the Celebration of Marriage, which become a Snare to many; this the Protestants found true by Experience, when under the Papal Yoke, and therefore have exploded part of their Ritual, whereof we have an account from Dr. *Willit*, and the manner thus.

1. *They who are to be joined in Matrimony, must be blessed by the Priest.*
2. *Oblations must be made for them in the Sacrifice of the Mass.*
3. *They are covered with a Veil.*
4. *They are coupled together with a Ribbon, partly white and partly blew.*
5. *The Bride giveth to the Bridegroom a Ring, hallowed first, and blessed by the Priest.*
6. *The Priest recommendeth them to God in Prayer.*
7. *He admonisheth them of their mutual Duties.* Dr. Willit, Synops. p. 713.

Now this use of the Ring amongst the Papists is condemned by this Learned Doctor of the Church of *England*, for a *superstitious Toy*, partly for that it must be *hallowed by the Priest*; and partly for that the Man holding the *Woman by the Ring, their Fingers across, some incharming words*, says he, *are then muttered*; but the words he sets not down.

And now because the use of the *Ring* in the Church of *England*, and *the kneeling at the Altar, and to the Priest for his Blessing*, are very doubtful to us, we shall here take a view of the matter. And,

1. The Ring must be laid upon the Service-Book.
2. The Priest must then give the Ring to the Bridegroom.
3. The Bridegroom must put the Ring upon the fourth Finger of the Woman's left Hand.
4. And holding the Woman by that Finger, must say these strange Words, *With this Ring I thee wed: with my Body I thee worship: with all my worldly Goods I thee endow. In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.*

Now these things, so far as we are able to understand them, do look as much like Superstition, as any thing which the Protestant Doctor has to object against the Popish use of the Ring: For why must the Ring be laid upon the Service-Book, and so pass through the

the Priests hand, before it be fit for the use it is to be made of? Certainly the Ring is hereby supposed to be made more fit to wed the Woman; and this it cannot be, unless it be supposed to be sanctified, or if there be nothing of all this, it seems to be wholly superfluous.

And for the Man to say he weds her (whom he has married sufficiently before) with that Ring, in the *Name of the Father*, &c. is so like a Sacramental form of Words, as that we are sure none more solemn are appointed to be used in Holy Baptism: nor can any higher form of Words be devised. Had Almighty God appointed this form of Words to be annexed to the use of a *Ring*, all Men would and surely might have concluded Marriage among Christians to be a Sacrament as well as Baptism: but seeing he hath not done it, it seems to us too bold an attempt; for any Church to impose such a Rite or Ceremony in so great a Name, and therefore in Conscience we dare not conform to the Church of *England* in this thing; for it is dangerous *to speak a Word*, much more to make an Institute, *in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, which he hath not commanded.*

Let us consider whence the Ring in Marriage was derived, that we may the better judg of the matter. 1. Then it is reckoned among the Heathen Roman Rites in their Marriages, and the manner thus; *The Man gave in token of good Will* (they say) *a Ring unto the Woman, which she was to wear upon the next Finger to the little Finger on the left Hand, because unto that Finger alone proceeded a certain Artery from the Heart:* Here seems to be the Radix or Spring of the Ring in Marriage, unless perhaps it might be before this among the superstitious Jews; for thus we read,

The Wedding-Ring among the Jews had this Inscription, MAZAL TOB, [which the Learned say, is to wish good luck] *and it was given to the Bride-wife: and the Hebrews called the Planet* Jupiter *Mazal, whose Influence they thought to be of great force for Generation.* Godwin. Antiq. of the Rom. and Jews.

Now which of these soever was the Spring-Head, though there seems to be something of Superstition or Folly in the Business, yet I think an impartial Man must needs say the Ring has attracted more of that kind among the Christian Nations, than it had among the Jews or Heathens. The short is, Were the Ring used only as a Civil Ceremony, without this seemingly sacred Solemnity, we should say nothing. But for Christians to adopt either the Heathen or Jewish superstitious Rites into the Service of the Church, and to make the Celebration of them ministerial Acts, is the Business for the serious and thinking Christian to consider.

And assuredly till it turn to the Lord to encline the Hearts of his People with one accord, to restore his Holy Ordinances (and amongst the rest this of Marriage) to their Native Purity and Simplicity, there will be continual cause of Sorrow, Discontents and Animosities amongst Christians, and occasion thereby given in all Christian Nations for the more Carnal and Ceremonious, to persecute the more Spiritual and serious sort of Christians. And the grave Author of the the first part of the naked Truth (not that of Mr. H.) makes those without doubt to be always the weakest and most carnal, who stand so much for Ceremonies; and speaking of the *Ring*, he makes it (in respect of himself) as a thing of meer Indifferency, to be married with or without it. And were it left to that Liberty, we should not much complain; but alas 'tis made so necessary that we cannot be married by a Priest without it.

2. We cannot understand how to worship our Wives, yet we can understand St. *Paul*, where he bids us *give them Honour as the weaker Vessel. To worship any Creature in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, is very Suspicious; but I say, to worship our Wives thus, is a thing we understand not. This seems to be borrowed from the forementioned Jews, who had *Jupiter* in such esteem. For the same Antiquarist tell us, that the Words of their Dowry-Bill ran thus, *Be thou unto me a Wife according to the Law of* Moses *and* Israel, *and I according to the Word of God will worship, honour, maintain and govern thee*, &c. But where the Word of God obliges a Man to worship his Wife, is yet unrevealed to us. There is indeed a Civil Worship due to our Superiours, or Persons of great Worth, *Luke* 14. 12. But the Law of God and Nature has made the Man Superiour in Marriage, and why are we to unman our selves to gratify a Ceremony?

In all that I have written I design nothing against the Church of *England*, whom I unfainedly honour, as I do all that heartily love Jesus Christ, as Charity commands me to believe she doth; yet let me freely say, that the Sign of the *Cross* in Baptism (though certainly an Errour, because added to a Sacred Institute of Christ, without any Allowance from his Word, yet) is much more excusable than this Sign of the *Ring*. For if we consider their Original, the *Cross* was used in Defence of his Honour who died upon a Cross, and in opposition to the Blasphemy both of Jews and Heathens. But the *Ring* was borrowed from the superstitious Rites both of Jews and Heathens, and so more unfit for any Service among Christians.

Again,

Again, The Crosſ is not ſo highly honoured in Baptiſm, as the Ring is in Marriage; for the Crosſ is not made or uſed in the Name of the Trinity, as we ſee the Ring is. Moreover, the Sign of the *Croſs* may be omitted ſometimes, even by the Laws of the Church of *England*, (as in private Baptiſm) but the Ring is not ſo. That Baptiſm is not doubted to be valid, which wants only the Sign of the Croſs, but (according to ſome of our preſent Clergy) the Ring muſt be one, or elſe they will not celebrate Marriage, and if it be done without the Rign, will almoſt condemn it for no Marriage at all. But ſure it is not in the Power of any Church to make Laws, Ordinances, Rites or Ceremonies, ſo neceſſary to this Ordinance of God (I ean Marriage) as that the Omiſſion of them ſhould null God's Ordinance, or put a Bar againſt Mens having the Benefit of that Ordiaance, which both the Law of God and Nature allows them.

Hath not the Church often been not only the leaſt, but alſo a perſecuted People in a Nation, and may be ſo again; how then can it pertain to her to make Laws in caſes which concern Men as Men, and all Men in a Nation as much as any? and in which ſhe is bound to obſerve the Laws of theſe Nations (ſo far as ſhe may do it without Sin) rather than preſcribe *(unleſs to teach the Law of God to them)* what Ceremonies they muſt uſe in their Nuptial Celebrations.

But foraſmuch as Marriages are the Foundation of Families, and that upon the Legality whereof the Good of Poſterity does much depend, we therefore conclude, this univerſal Ordinance of God is under the Cognizance of the Magiſtrate, whoſe care is to ſee that nothing be done herein againſt the Law of God, right Reaſon and common Honeſty, but that all Violation of theſe rules of Government ſhould be corrected, and the contrary encouraged. And herein we chearfully ſubmit our ſelves to their Majeſties, and to all that are in Authority as in Duty bound, moſt humbly intreating that ſome prudent care may be taken by our Superiours that whatſoever is grievious herein may be removed.

FINIS.